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The true Settlement
Of a
CHRISTIANS FAITH,

After shaking Assaults, by its own evidence; and by the internal sealing Work of the Spirit;

Pointed at, in some special Inquiries thereon, in a LETTER to a Friend.

WITH

Some serious Reflections on the present times we are in, and those great Vicissitudes of Providence, which have been in the publick State of BRITAIN in this last Age, in a II. Letter.

By a MINISTER of the GOSPEL.

Printed in the Year 1692.

The true Settlement

CHRISTIANITY

D. D. WILLIAMS'S LIBRARY
RED CROSS STREET
LONDON.

R E A D E R

H E publishing these few sheets, hath had no rise or call from the desires of any, or the least motives of such a nature, but it was with a serious desire that they might have some interest in the Service of the Truth in so sad and trying a time, and for him to whom I stand under the highest engagements of Duty, in improvement of a little Season, which must ere long be shut up. It is true, the writing of the first Letter had a very providential and unexpected rise, with respect to a Friend who I knew had as great assistances in the way of means as any, suitable to his case, yet finding the weight & exercise of his mind, have such strong influence to obstruct that enjoyment of an intire rest and fixedness of his Faith, which is the Christians Allowance, I was prest to offer some thoughts, in a directive manner for being a Helper to his Joy, and now if by such a Providence through the good Hand of the Lord, this might be serviceable to any in such a

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case.

case. The Subject of the II. Letter is of a much different nature from the first, where somethings may possibly seem a little strange, and the spirit and temper of most in this day not so easily bear, but they are spoke in the Words of Truth and Sobriety; & in writing of both I have humble confidence to say it was with the furthest of light and perswasion, yea that the most serious part therein, was with my own spirit, to have that evidence in things of so high concern, as I might have peace and assurance herein before God, yet if I knew, there were any thing in the least to prejudice that great Interest of Truth and Edification as the utmost aim I hope is proposed herein, I should count it my honor to retreat the same; but under some serious prospect of an eternal State, and of appearing before the great Judge, I have desired to know his Counsel, and rest my soull on his approving Testimony alone.

An excessive desire in such an epistolary way to speak things in as few Words I could possibly, I fear may at the first view render somethings more dark. The Reader also will tenderly notice and construct Mistakes in the Printing.

HONOURED SIR,



IT was a sweet surprisal in such a time as this to meet with a friend on whom I found a more then ordinary sence and weight of the greatnesse of the Christian Faith; and to have another prospect of such an attainment; to enjoy an entire rest and assurance of mind herein then most seem to have; even of the more serious part of Christians; which did render it the more desirable to offer some thoughts to you on so weightie a concern, not onlie to answer a special promise and engadgment I was under; but with hope, through the good hand of the Lord, that such a service may not be wholly lost for the end it is designed. But on so great a subject I must go a little out of an Epistolary way both in the method and measure; and what in the first place I would speak to is this, that I durst offer nothing to divert, or take off any thing of the suitable weight of so choise an exercise as is so rare in these times, under which your spirit is so much pressed, but were it needful rather to add thereto on these grounds.

1. That it is surely the greatest designe can be
 under the consideration of mankind for men
 have such an assurance of divine truth, as can
 both answer the greatnesse of that adventure they
 have thereon, and can fully quiet and comfort
 the soul when visible refuges, and humane as-
 sistance, seem wholly to succumbe; and since we
 must either have an entire rest, and settleme
 herein, or none at all, I know not how to judge
 otherwise of that ordinar sence, and imple
 credit on so great an account as this, then a
 degree, and evidence of the sad Atheism of t
 day we are now in. 2. If ever I knew any thing
 the way of God in truth, I must reckon this
 the highest enjoiment of a Christian, where
security, and quiet of his mind, upon the true
 answers to so great a *Revelation* hereof, and
 know he is thus on sure terms with God, on
 whole adventures of his trust; when it is so ne
 to adventure on the triall thereof in the last de
 sion of there eternal state; yea when thus th
 know how to enjoy a promise for there support
 this state of warefare, under a *long deferred ho*
 tho the whole course of providence would se
 to controul the same, knowing the ground th
anchor on cannot possibly fail: since this sho
 be the *ultimate Inquiry* about the event, that
 sure they have a *divine testimonie* to warrant th
 confidence, and if the highest joy and comfort
 our life be not stated on such an account i

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strange. 3. If it be understood what it is to be a Christian in earnest, and what is called for of such amidst the numerous tryalls and temptations of this *militant state*; it must need some higher degrees of *assurance*, and inward establishment, then seems by most to be either apprehended or sought after; and that, such have some *proper stock* of his own, of these *special aides and assistances* as may be at hand in an hour of tryall, for how can the life, and serious work of Godliness, be conceivable under such common and transient impressions, as most have of the truth and certainty hereof. 4. Doe men know what *Christianity* means, and the high consequence of such a distinguishing profession, from the residue of mankind, or is there any suitable exercise of reason about the greatnesse of that hope of the Gospel, which we have set before us, and yet be a subject both of ordinary thoughts, and assent hereto, which may still be as though it were a new discovery to us in the present day since it might be judged, that if there were a *Methuselahs* age to pass within time, this should be a suitable, and continued exercise therein both to enquire, and admire on the assured hope of an *eternity with God*, which they have before them; and that they are to enter into a state, where they shall be in the same *Classe* with the Angels of Heaven, and made equal unto them; I have known such who for many years have been dazzled

with this glorie, and greatness of that *Mysterie* of Christ and of life, and immortality in a future state, as hath made it there continued and high exercise, to have a further, and new strengthening of their faith herein, who yet all that time knew not what it was to be shaken, or to have any inward fear as to their own personal interest here, but still found the *Revelation of the Gospel*, great a thing, and their spirits so deeply affected with the wonders of our Religion, that whatever did tend to a higher strengthening of their faith herein, was also the greatest addition to their joy, and in that sense did most understand such a saying, *nunquam satis magna securitas in re tanti momenti ubi periclitatur eternitas.*

But in the next place what thoughts I would humbly offer to one of so knowing and judicious spirit, and where so great assistances you may have access to improve other ways, shall be made in a directive way upon a sevenfold inquiry, that may be of greatest weight for a Christians laying the ground work of their profession on solid and clear grounds, which lyes first here.

1. To know that rare and peculiar order that is suitable in a Christians first entry on Religion, to consider a serious weight of the same on their spirits, since as in any great studie, there is an entrance and a progresse, and that it is sure in the whole frame of Christianity there is so entire a correspondence as nothing stands alone by it self,

Mysterie in a line of mutual respect, which in that manner runs through the same, as an entry aright upon one step, must make way to render a further progress clear and unavoidable, so here I must judge.

1. That a Christian should once make it such a proper and solemn business, and work by it self, to attain a solid founding, and settlement of their faith on the truth, and to list his soul in such a manner, as if he were then to enter on the Christian profession, without respect to example, education, or influence of any humane authority, or whatever any external motives could have weight herein, since in a case of that high concern men should in the greatest recess and composure of spirit, have some distinct special time, such as may be matter after of sweet reflexion to them, how they did then prove themselves, with respect to so high and discriminating a profession, from the residue of the world, and did thus with full inward consent join in with the truth purely on its own evidence, as though there were none of that profession in the bounds and place they lived in.

2. As the naturall order of things should require that the foundation be sure laid, ere we begin to build; so is it sure that the first entry on serious Religion, must be on the Faith of the divine nature, and existence, and that men have assuredly a God to trust to, and to make them happy, as

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I. To know that rare and peculiar *order* that is suitable in a Christians *first entry* on Religion, under a serious weight of the same on their spirit since as in any great studie, there is an *entrance* and a *progresse*; and that it is sure in the whole *frame of Christianity* there is so entire a correspondence as nothing stands alone by it self,

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Hebr. 11: 6. he must first beleewe that he is, &c. and in the same order, *John 17: 3. must beleewe him to be the only true God, ere he come to beleewe Jesus Christ whom he hath sent:* O how uncomfortable a thing should humane state be without God, and an absolute dependance on him, who might see his life to be rather a curse, and torment, then blessing, if there were no *supernatural help* above himself, against the evil, and miseries of time, and to subdue the distempers of the mind, and the fears that should thus fall upon him both as to his present and future state, but what possible comfort could there be in the light of a *Deity*, or enjoyment of a *Godhead*, if we know not with assurance also, the *Excellencie* of his *blest nature*, and what a *God* we have to adventure on.

3. Thus by an unavoidable constraint there must be a further *progresse*, and *enquirie* upon the certaintie of a *revealed rule of correspondence betwixt God and man* here, both in order to duty, and what we may expect, and hope from him; and if it be true this day that there be an express, and clear revelation of his will here to be found in the earth; that comes with full and infallible evidence to men; for here is it not possible to stand or fix until our faith be once settled, on the truth of such a *divine record*, where we see in what estate poor mankind were in such a sure way of commerce were not betwixt the

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invisible God, and this visible world we are in, since then we should have no certain, and fixed boundaries betwixt good, and evil, by that unchangeable difference, which the holy nature of God hath put herein nor could we ever know that rule of subjection, and relation we stand under to him; then heaven and earth were shut up from correspondence together by any established rule for the same; then should the most excellent and essentiall part of man, his immortall soul, have no directive or comforting light as to his future state, and safe passage thereto, whilst the visible creation hath a sun to shine thereon; when such is the way to life as by the greatest improvements of nature it can be neither found nor followed; then should that rare structure, and workmanship or grace here, and of glory and blessedness to come, be a *terra incognita* to poor mankind, and as man only in this lower creation is capable of moral Government and humane lawes, which yet can extend no further, then their visible work, and actions, if such a blessed record were not, there should be no establishment of lawes to the whole inward man, no rule of regulation to the heart, and this inward world, would be subject to no Government, and tho the ruined state of humane nature may be as discernable as the truth of it's existence, yet should we neither know its true original, and rise, nor any relief for the same, we might discern the truth of invi-

visible adversaries, and of some great design they have against us, as clearly as any object of sense; but we could know no security from them by an *invisible guard*, or the way how to resist such a party, then should the *work and conduct of providence* be wholly unintelligible to us, and have our eyes shut on these wonders hereof which exceed the sphere, of created understanding, in this great *luminary of the Scripture*, did not continually shine thereon which we cannot see, and not see also, that no way besides this was ever made known to recover poor mankind out of that gulf of bondage and misery he is fallen into; and as this glorious *light of divine truth* hath its proper *sphere* where it is fixed, and shines forth in the Christian Church; so the whole world beside, is a place where *horror, falsehood, and impiety* do visibly reign.

4. But this must lead men of a serious spirit to a further *enquiry*, upon that *essential difference* which is betwixt the *revealed rule of our Religion* and *any other way*, that pretends thereto as there is betwixt *light, and darkness*, which is not founded by *positive institution* only, but in the *immutable nature* of these things themselves; and thus I design to speak more fully to this hereafter, yet should this be of highest use to strengthen the Christian faith, to look in with the serious use of reason on the whole frame of *Paganisme*, as it was in ancient times, or of *Mahometisme* in this

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this day, where even under a sense of the law and dictates of nature such a sight were enough to expose the very name, and form of Religion, to be just matter of abhorrence, and so be the highest reproach of mankind, and thus see whither so brutish, and horrid a thing could ever claim a reception either on the purity of its rule, or any internal evidence of truth, or possible consistence with its self; so that to have no sense or beleef of the glorious being of God, is not worse, or more dreadful, then to have the highest contumely, and affront, thus put on the *divine nature*, and which tends rather to justify *Atheism*. This enquiry were it suitably improven could not but render that *dilemma* unanswerable, either a *Christian* or of no Religion at all; either that which we enjoy according to the *Laws*, and *constitutions* of the Christian faith, or else an absolute nullity as to all Religion, and that no such sacred thing had a being on the earth.

INQUIRY II. But as it is not possible to hold by the truth of a *Godhead* or to have any true enjoyment of Religion, without a further and unavoidable progresse to the *Christian Faith*; so must the first entry hereof be on the *old Testament*, and by a necessary result upon this inquiry, if the God of truth gave such a promise of a redeemer to mankind after the fall, and that on this great assurance, the faith of the ancient Church did entirely rest; that so glorious a person as the *Messias*

should come, and be anointed to that work of a
deeming man, and bringing him again to God
 since this must be first cleared, and our faith fixt
 on the same ere we can enter on any enjoiment
 the *Gospel*, for the faith of the new Testament
 is not attainable else, but in such an *order* and
 settlement of our faith in the *old*, and hath an
 absolute dependance on the same; wherein the
 weight of this enquiry lyes. 1. To see the truth
 and nature of that *promise*, which was the *first*
immediate object of the Churches faith, to be ir-
 revocable, and absolute, and given to be declar-
 ative of the immutable purpose, and counsel
 of God herein, and not dependant upon any con-
 dition in man. 2. How this one great promise was
 given to be the *original right*, and warrant of
 all other promises, which doe wholly center in him
 in whom they are *yea, and amen*. 3. As a pro-
 mise of such a nature that reason must be
 amazed at the greatnes hereof, and cry out
 how this possibly be, yea the more deep enquiry here-
 in must highten such an astonishment, and make
 the soul of a Christian sinke under the thought
 of such a thing that God wil in very deed bear
 regard to man; this being a truth of that con-
 ceit as it might seem strange how one day should pre-
 vail over men, without some fresh reviving of
 such a reflection. 4. To see how high a value, and
 account God put upon that one *promise*, by so long
 a delay, and procrastination of the same, as a p

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mise worthy of the Churches waiting, and ex-
pectation of the same, for 4000. Years. 5. This
enquiry must lye here, to see the first entry of the
Christian Faith on the world in its precise time,
and date, and how such a light did not shine on
Adam, and *Eve* in the state of perfection, whilst
they stood in a state of tryal upon a perfect obe-
dience to their God, but with the falling down of
that dismal night of there fall, did the glory of
this light first dawn (that there might be no utter
darknets in the state of *mankind* as in that of the
fallen angels;) whereby the final condemnatory
sentence on the one, and releeve for the other were
made known, and promulgate together, and
the room of the *first Adam*, filled up with a higher
glory by the *second*. 6. How this blessed light
(tho with a *gradual increase*;) did never cease to
shine on this world since it began to dawn, nor
hath there ever ceased a peculiar people in a
Church relation, who were distinct, and separate
from the residue of men, whose profession was
founded in the alone faith of a redeemer, so as
one day hath not been, since the first entry of that
promise, wherein, the *sun* did shine on the earth,
when the *sun of righteousness* did not shine also by
vital influences of light, and power; and where
the *Churches head*, had not some part of his body
here to converse with as the peculiar objects of
his complaisance, and love, and did rejoice in
the habitable parts of the earth; tho that some ages
have

have had, a higher glory assigned thereto; and a larger extent of the Church; yet would he not restrict the *ingathering of his elect* to any special *periods of time*; or let each age want a share of this glory, and of a seed to be as *salt to the earth*. 7. But this *enquiry* goes further, to see these measures of *evidence*, and divine condescendence which was given to support the faith of the ancient Church, on that great promise even by an *ocular discovery*, to the outward sense, as in the whole *frame* and successive course of the *legal sacrifices*, and these numerous *figures*, and *types* in that long preparatory service; wherein he did not let his people feed on ashes, naked shadows, and where nothing was inept or useless, but was expressly significative, of that highest *mystery of Christ*, and could possibly bear no other sense, or intent; and since the whole stress of the *Christian Faith* lyes upon this *one promise*, or what can make the state of man valuable, in any true enjoyment of his life here, its on this *heaven* should be sett the first settlement of our faith; for I know no releef, but in a *promised redeemer*, and if it were not for the *old Testament*, I could not possibly be a *Christian*; if the morning, and growing-light, of that glorious mystery, had not gone before its meridian hight, and as a clear conduct to the next step, I shall enter on

A. III. INQUIRY, to know that this *fundamental promise of a redeemer coming to the world* is as

is assuredly made good, and is no more a matter of faith, but of sense, that its sure our eyes see such a day, and long expected period of time, and can be no dark or doubtful thing now to be a Christian, but may enter on its profession in the open light; but to clear how with the same evidence of the certainty of the promise, we may see its performance also, and if we be sure of the one that it is not possible to be in question about the other, is thus visible. 1. Because we must then part with the *old Testament*, and cease to credit its *divinity*, and no comfort could be from the same; if it had yet failed in this great event, and what is the main intent thereof for if the *promised Messias were yet to come*, I could then look for none, since all these *proper circumstances*, which are so expressly foretold, whereby to know and discern him, must be wholly made void, and an utter nullity should be in that faith. 2. Because I could not possibly look for the accomplishment of that *promise*, according to the whole tenor of the *old Testament*, in another way then what we have hereof in the revelation of the *Gospel*; yea were it supposable that the *Messias* were yet to come; is it sure I could only look and expect for his acting the same part and in the same appearance. 3. Let us but compare the *antient creed* of the Church herein, with that which is ours, now under the dispensation of the *Gospel*, and see whither they be not entirely on in substance, and

and center in the same redeemer; with this variation only, that the one was on the credit and assurance of what was *promised*, and the other on the certainty of its *accomplishment*, so as that may be as applicable, to *Moses*, *Isaia*, and *Daniel*, with other of the Prophets, as to the *Evangelists*, what is spoke by *John Chap. 20: v. 31*. But there are written that ye might beleve that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, the Son of God, and that beleiving ye might have life through his name; where we may see there could be no humane contrivance, in this joint concurring for the same end, and by the same spirit: but yet more specially lyes the weight of this enquiry, to see, 1. how the most solemn times of the *old Testament* was still a *waiting*, and *expecting time*, and that their highest enjoiment lay in hope of that glory to be revealed in after ages, when the seal should be taken off that great *Prophecy*, then sealed up, and how the whole dispensation of that time was *preparatory*, and a *prelude* to that great design of grace, which was to be brought forth. 2. How the breaking up of the *Gospel*, and its first entry on the world, had its *precise time*, and *date*, as that which was so absolutely necessary, for a more clear settling of the Christian Faith, this being a *matter of fact*, and of the highest import that ever was, and was an *external object of Sense*, in the view of the *World*, which laid an inevitable constraint, on the whole *Christian Church*, then to have

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kept clear, and under the most exact and punctual circumstances. 3. As *Israel's* coming out of *Egypt* in a typical respect, was a night, and time of such great observation, and that the Lord did put hereon, so special a weight, with respect to the punctual and precise time hereof; so was this in a more eminent way, to be matter of highest regard, when and in what time, the great universal good, and blessing of mankind, our blessed redeemer, was revealed unto the World, which should begin a new week, and that solemn *Epocha*, whence wee reckon the Churches entry on the highest glory of time, and on a new state. 4. Hereon hath that solemn observation of the first day of the week, as the *Lords day* both its title, and right; tho it might seem not possible this could ever come under forgetfulness when it was thus fixed, upon the highest certainty, and precise time, both of the sufferings, and resurrection, of the Lord, in matter of fact; as that day and time was, which had a glory put thereon, that none else could possibly claim, and no time ever since that glass, sett up to their creation, was like unto this, yea which was wholly impossible to fix the Christian Church on the observation hereof otherways, but that this was so publick and famous in the view of the world, and had so great a weight on the primitive Christians, then, when these morning stars sung together, and the Sons of God shouted for joy, at the first entry of this

this *new World*, and it may be specially remarkable, that our Lord did the less inforce the law in an *authoritative way*, both to try and try the love of his people herein, that what he had done for them, put so strong an enforcement and imposition, to a frequent and solemn remembrance of this blessed day from internal motives, and tho its divine authority be clear, yet the law is of *positive institution* this way, the more strengthening might it be to our *faith*, and more excitement also for our *love* herein, were it seriously considered, §. And of what weight should this *enquiry* be still on mens spirits, that our hope leans now no more on a *promise*, on which the Saints of old did both live and die, when this makes so essential a change in the Christian Faith, that what an *Abraham* and *Moses* was saved by cannot possibly save us, to *believe in a Redeemer to come*, which would now be absolutely *mortall*, nay not in general terms to believe that he is come, but to know and be sure, that it is he whom the Fathers sealed, and sent unto this *World*, and he alone who in the dayes of *Tiberius* and *Pontius Pilate* suffered at *Jerusalem*.

A IV. INQUIRY, which suitably follows here, is to look in upon the glory of that time under the *new Testament*, which was peculiarly reserved thereto; and on these publick declarative signs to the World, whereby our Redeemer was declared to be the Son of God, with power

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and by the *spirit of Holiness*, so as it may be said
the Lord did then *set up Signs and Wonders to*
this very day, with a more eminent lustre then
these at the Churches outgoing from *Egypt*; but
since in the *times* we live in, you may find more
to shake and stagger then to strengthen your spi-
rit in the way of truth, when it is not in an ordi-
nare degree, that a *reall Apostacy* may be seen
from the *Christian Faith* this day in the *Reformed*
Churches, whilst that choice spirit of the *Bereans*
seems rarely to be found in the earth, I shall touch
but a little this *great subject in some instances*,
wherein our *blest Redeemer* after his *Ascension*
hath still made himself *visible* before the World in
the glory of his divine Power, and are of such
kind, as no distance of time can take off that ir-
resistable evidence of the same from a serious spi-
rit, as if they were still present.

1. That tho *in his bodily presence*, since he
left the World, he is no *object* any more of hu-
mane sense, yet hath he been no less *visible* in his
goings forth to *conquer and establish a Kingdom to*
himself out of all Nations, Tongues and Langua-
ges, even to the utmost parts of the earth; and
since I know you can improve some *Reflections* on
this Head, beyond what I can speak thereon, I
shall the more briefly point at a few. 1. That it is
known and sure, how most of the habitable
World besides *Judea*, was in times past *Pagan*,
and a place of horror and darkness, and these parts

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we now live in were once the *dark places of earth*, full of the *Habitations of Cruelty*, where our *Ancestors* of whom we are come, did sacrifice to the *Gods of the Heathens*. 2. It is evident and undeniable in the matter of *Fact*, that within less then *sixty Years* after the *Ascension of the Lord*, the visible extent of the *Christian Church* among the *Nations* which had been then *Heathen*, exceed what it is this day; and since any extraordinary effect when it comes in our sight, should cause a deep Inquiry upon the cause hereof, is this a matter of the highest concern, that was, even in the present day to be taken up with that made then so stupendious a change on the face of mankind, and was as the bringing forth of a new World. 3. And here is it possible to question, that this wonderful thing which did visibly then change the whole face of the earth was by the alone evidence and virtue of *Salvation Truth*, and the pure Revelation of *Christ* in the *Mystery of his Death and Sufferings*, where no humane Power could boast that their *Arm and Sword* did bring this about; as I know it will be sweet and convincing thus to see under what influence, the *Christian Church* was both planted and propagate in the earth and most savage parts thereof, so that whatever respect *Princes and visible Powers* have given to the *Kingdom of Christ* yet is it fully demonstrable that it is true *intention and conquest* was never beholden to humane

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stance, or that any temporal inducements made
 way thereto, but when the World began to smile
 nist in the *primitive times*, then also did the
 Glory and Lustre of the Christian Religion begin
 to darken, and decline. 4. As it was solely
 reserved to the *Gospel State of the Church*, to be
 the *Theater of the greatest Wonders both of Provi-*
dence, and Grace, beyond all that had been
 known to the World before, and that in the times
 of the *New Testament*, these great things which
 should be matter of highest observation, and out
 of the ordinaire road of Gods dealing with his
 Church then was to be expected, so you can see
 with full evidence, that this great and extraor-
 dinaire appearance of God unto men, had been
 never known on the earth before, or any such
 outgiving of his Power since the beginning of
 time, which was only reserved to follow the day
 of Christ, and his *Ascension*, as the first entry of
 that glorious Scene, which was to be acted under
 the *Gospel*. 5. And here also this Reflection is
 unavoidable, how the God of this World was not
 easily put off his *visible Throne*, which he had so
 long kept over the Nations, but the last struggle
 of these infernal spirits ere they were cast down
 was then very strong, and put forth to the ut-
 most, who yet were made to fall before the Dispo-
 sity of our Redeemer in such a manner, as the
 whole frame of *Paganism* was then raz'd and ex-
 tinct, and their Gods after whom the earth had

for so many ages wondred; for when you peruse the *Records of the first times*, you can see the fury and rage of the World against Sacred Truth, was never before raised to such a prodigious height, as was then aloft upon the first display of the Gospel.

2. But it is yet a further Inquiry should be made on this *Head*, to see not only the *outgoings of Lord Jesus in the Glory of his Power since his ascension*, for setting up his *visible Kingdom in the World*, and extent of the *Christian Profession*, but in the *reality of that vital influence on the souls of men*, with so great and wonderful a change thus made on them from the residue of mankind. This, I doubt not, will be a subject of great thoughts and reflection to you, and should be a matter of higher concern to any of a serious spirit, than the temporal interest and transactions which are about the greatest Kingdoms on earth. 1. To see how no reality in nature, the most visible objects of sense, can be more sure, than that under the times of the *New Testament*, there hath been innumerable examples of the truth and power of Holiness, succeeding from one age to another, in whom it might be more discernable, that they walked in the virtue and power of a *humane soul*, than that they did truly walk before men in the *light and power of Christianity*, and under that visible influence of *inward Grace*, as all might see to be above.

possibility of *natural causes*. 2. If this were more deeply search'd into, to see what does essentially belong to the *frame and constitution of one real Christian*, and what a marvelous Power must be put forth herein, it could not but be in another manner affecting, and afford a *Seal to the Christian Faith*, as does exceed the greatest external *Miracles*, when it's sure and example of such, who is truly converted by grace, and made partaker of the *Divine nature*, is so stupendious a work as does far exceed both the power and comprehension of *Angels*, yea that the *Glory of the Godhead* does more eminently shine forth in the *first frame*, in the *conduct*, and *persevering of one Christian*, then either in the *first frame of man* in his state of perfection, or of the *illuminate Angels*, since this is to make *Saints of Sinners*, to turn such from a state of enmity, and inbred opposition to the Holy God to be Lovers of him, and subdue their souls in that manner, as with inward delight can make them part with what was their predominant and endeared Interest, and what hath been as their right hand and eye. This is one of the great discoveries of the *Gospel*, to let us see how one converted *Christian* is a higher demonstration of the *Christian Faith*, then a thousand *ordinaire Professors* hereof, and may fully silence such a *Question*, why it is, that the *Saints* are not more numerous in the *World*, comparatively with the great bulk of mankind, yea with these

who go under the Christian Profession, when might be rather just matter of wonder to see the such *numerous Examples* yet are to be found this kind in the earth, of whom each, is *one the greatest of the Works of God*, and infinite becoming the exceeding greatness of his Power put forth herein; yea are such *Examples*, where the Truth and Excellency of *Grace* does in an eminency shine forth, as may justly supply the Room of *Miracles*, which were given in the *first times* to be confirming to the *Christian Faith* that these hath assuredly been, and I hope at this day not a few, who doe with desire choise preferre their *Servises* for God, to the greatest comforts & enjoyments of this earth, and are helped not only to keep ground, but gain, under such *conflicts and assaults* in their spiritual course, go above the *possibility of nature* to withstand.

3. And what a wonder may one Christian be who does converse with God here on the earth both to himself and others, who hath such enjoyments of the *divine presence*, hath such astonishing hopes, hath ever the *Eloft Angels* be both their guard and observers; and the *Saints above* return no more to converse with them yet is it not questionable, but that they have the same prospect of the *outgoings of providence* towards the *Saints yet militant*, & as to their *several trialls, and victories*, which the *Angels* have whom they are now made equal, and in the same

on, when I see that they are to see that they be found of God, is one of the infinitely great Power of his Power, where he does in any supply the want in the first Christian Faith; and I hope are the choice to the greatest comfort are helped under such course, as withstand. Christian be, the earth, such near the such Angels to the the with us have the service, have to the same state

state of perfection; and that they know the return of their prayers in behalfe of such who are on the earth, for whom they had wrestled with God whilst they were upon it; yea that the joy which is in Heaven, and in the presence of the Angels, on the conversion of sinners respects the whole Church triumphant; and I humbly judge even in that sense may the intent of that Scripture be understood *Hebr. 12: 1. as so such a cloud of Witnesses &c.*

3. Let me referr you to one great instance also, wherein our Redeemer hath in an eminent way made himself visible before the World since his Ascension, which is in the greatness of that *seal of Martyrdom*, where you may see with joy and admiration that as he did attort the highest discoveries of his love unto lost man to the day of the Gospel; so did he reserve unto these times, the highest Testimony and trial of the Love of Mankind to him. This is a great Subject, tho it be easily past without a suitable weight and impression of the same; how high an interest this hath in the Christian Faith; wherein 1. the truth of such a wonderful seal in the matter of fact is not possible to question. 2. And that it is sure there was no personated shew in these unexpressible sufferings of these Saints for Christ, nor did the World in such a persecuting work, through most of the times of the New Testament conflict with a shadow herein; and if a real *abuse* be such as

exceed the sphere and possibility of nature; it
 hath thus the most full and undeniable evidence,
 nor vvere it possible that the *most excellent*
of the earth should upon choise act such a
 part of imbracing death under the greatest
 torments, when their life and the enjoyments
 of time was set before them, if they had not
 been acted by a *Divine Spirit*, and knew these un-
 expresseble comforts and joy, which was then
 given in for their support, and matter of present
 sense, and feeling, to be no illusion of mind here-
 in. 3. It is on this *Head* you can see and com-
 pare what a difference was betwixt the *Legal Sa-*
crifices under the Old Testament, which were *fi-*
gurative and typical, and these *freewil offerings*
and oblations of love by Martyrdom under the
Gospel, which were offered up as a publick
confirmatory Seall to the Divinity of Christ, and
 that the *desire of all Nations* was now come; how
 the one did in a mystery, and under a vaile con-
 firm the Churches Faith of a *Redeemer to come*,
 the other with the highest evidence of power did
 attest his being come, and *seall this Testimony*
with their Blood, the one from a temporary and
positive Institution, the other not only under a
 constraint of light, but an *imposition of love*, by
 the *Spirit of Christ*, and of *Glory resting on them*,
 was thus offered up, and as to the *quality of these*
Sacrifices how great a difference was herein
 the one only of *Beasts*, wherein the Lord would
 admit

admit no humane Sacrifice to be *typical*, but now
 after the great *propitiation* was offered up, these
Sacrifices of Love was not only of men, but of the
 most excellent of humane race, who in purity
 and holiness were the greatest ornament of the
 earth in their day, the number whereof since the
 Ascension of Christ, is of that extent as can be
 only known by him who counts the number of the
Stars, so innumerable have they been; yea as to
 the expence and allowance of so high a service,
 men can not exercise reason, and not see it did not
 only answer but exceed the measure of their suf-
 ferings, and how these *Flames of Love* in which
 they were offered, was more prevalent then the
 of the Fire. 4. And is it not matter of sweet Re-
 flection herein, that as the incomprehensible Love
 of God unto man is the admiration of the elect An-
 gels, so this illustrious testimony of humane Love
 unto God, is not only made conspicuous to them,
 but is both the foile and torment of the Powers of
 Darknes, to see such a triumph of the Power of
 Grace amongst men here on the earth made vi-
 sible; wherein my soull desires to rejoyce that as
 our blest Head hath assigned such a measure of
 his sufferings, as a testimony to the truth to be filled
 up by his People, under the times of the New
 Testament, and to take a higher tryall of the love
 of mankind herein to him, then he would take
 even of the love of the blessed Angels, so hath this
 Testimony with the clearest and undeniable evi-
 dence been made known. But

But there is a 4. *special Instance* of the outgoings of our Redeemer in a *visible discovery* of himself to the World since his *Ascension*, which is in the *successive course* of the Gospel amongst the Nations; and these remarkable Periods of the rising and setting of this blessed light on different places of the earth; on which a few things would speak for your further clearing herein.

1. That it is undeniable, the *Gentiles* have their *appointed times*, which must be fulfilled, *Luke 21 v. 24.* wherein the *fulneß* thereof must be brought in *Rom. 11: 25.* which Scriptures bear expressely the same intent; but it's now many ages, since these *times of the Gentiles* hath been fulfilled both in *Asia* and *Africa*, where the Gospel in its course at the *Sun*, hath had its first upbreking when in the *East*, and its progress to the *West* and *Northern Parts of the Earth*.

2. That it is clear these *times of the Gentiles*, and the *fulneß* thereof is to be only understood in a *distinct and separate State* from the *Jews*, so that as the *Jewish Church* once had their proper *times* allotted them in a separate state from the whole residue of the World so have the *Gentiles* had their *times* under the *New Testament*, peculiar to them only; and the *Spirit of God* hath there expressly shewed, that this great Revolution in the incalling of the *Jews* to the *Christian Faith*, is not to be expected until these *times* be once accomplish'd, when there shall be then no more distinguishing names of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

of the out *Jew and Gentile*, and no proper interest owned by them in a divided way as formerly; but that the Lord shall be one, and his name one, in that blessed frame of his universal Kingdom; it's in the faith hereof my soull does rest. 3. How far these *sett times of the Gentiles*, and of the coming in of the *fulves* thereof, be accomplish'd, will in due time be disclosed, and with humble sobriety we must judge hereof, but it may be so far evident, that then some singular withdrawing of the Spirit of God in the Power of the Gospel will be discernable from the *Gentile Church*, with the shutting up of these times, and a very low ebb; & great darknets on the whole *Western Churches*, before the rising again of the Glory of that Light, and return of the Sun to the *East* again; and how it stands now with the publick State of the *Gentile Churches* any where, you can more fitly judge and discern.

There is a *V. INQ.* yet for a more full settlement in the *Christian Faith*, that I would seriously commend, which is on the *whole frame and nature of that pure and excellent Religion we profess*, and the *intrinsic* perfections thereof; which beside the *Authority of divine Institution*, you may see founded in the *immutable nature and essence of the same*, and thus have your soull rais'd to admire and rejoice in that God, whose *Excellencies* are with that evidence herein display'd, as it is not possible for men to be more blest in the earth, then

then in this way. It is here I may say 'hath my
 Spirit been oft drawn forth to see with admiration
 the *Divinity and Perfections of the Moral Part of*
our Religion, so that if men would see in a true
 mirror what the *Holy invisible God is like in his*
blessed Resemblance, lo here is it clearly presented
 to them, and since any discovery of such a *Light*
 I know you prefer much above the *Light of the*
Sun on this earth, as that alone which renders the
 state of man to be desirable; I would touch this
 little as may afford some reflections, on so great
 a *Head*, which may be, in the very notion thereof
 of, rarely the subject of mens thoughts. 1. That
 which is of the highest concern in the *first place*
 to fix your spirit on, is to see in what *manner the*
great design of the Gospel, for the saving of lost
man is layd, in that mystery of the *Humiliation*
and Sufferings of our Redeemer, and how this
 way the *Majesty of God would take satisfaction*
to himself, and his infinite Justice, by himself
 which otherwise was not attainable; I know that
 to look in an ordinarie manner hereon, might be
 ready to shake your spirit with astonishment, that
 the *Divine Majesty* should ascribe to himself
 such an *abasement*, as to join in the *humane na-*
ture in an union with the Deity, yea thus to be ex-
 posed to the highest ignominy of *sufferings*, that
 could possibly be allotted to the most *Criminal*
 amongst men, but it's in such a choise enquiry
 you will find your establishment and admiration

grow together, and thus have a share in the same exercise of the *Angels* on this subject, who look in hereon with joy and wondring. 2. You must see herewith also, how of such a nature is this blessed Religion you enjoy, as can never be known or enjoyed by men until it be enlightened from Heaven, or be possibly taken up or understood in a natural way, as humane sciences are, but must have another teacher then men, and a faculty and power supernatural, to know and discern the things of God herein; yea how in its whole constitution it is made up of these great Excellencies of Light and Life, which do inseparably meet here; whole evidence lyes in seeing, and not in report or a naked testimony to the ear, but is in the same manner as the Sun is made known by its own beams and light; and it were indeed sad, if the Sun of Righteousness did not this day shine with as full evidence to men in this Lower Orb of the Gospel, as the Meridian Daylight is to our natural sense, to let us see both the greatness and security of our hope, yea that we are designed for an Eternal State, & must therefore seek after a Blessedness as will last as long as our immortal souls that cannot perish. 3. But this will necessarily carry your thoughts further, to see how the Christian Faith does not only with full evidence manifest its self by its own Light, but does the more brightly appear by the opposition of darkness; and of every false way and pretence of Religion; and how the

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essential Differences betwixt the same are as fully
 vident and visible, as is betwixt the day and
 night, betwixt truth and falsehood, which are
 founded in the immutable nature of these things
 themselves; and how *the way of truth* hath surely
 that *vital air and fragrantcy* herewith, and such
 a *native lustre*, as is no more possible for human
 art and invention to represent, then it were to
 draw a *living man* on a board, or for one to draw
 forth the *natural sent of a Violet or Rose*. 4. It is
 here also you will find it specially strengthening to
 see the *nature of these services*, which belong to
 the *Christian Faith*, how here is nothing that is
 servile, or to affright any to come under such a
 blessed yoke, which in its whole constitution is full
 of a Holy sweetness to allure, and imposable
 no *Law of Bondage* on the spirits of men, but
 what hath inward motives to render it both easy
 and comforting, does prescribe no duty to be
 task, and no service but from love, and where
 the *Moral Law* is purely *Evangelick*, and admini-
 nistred to us in the *Hands of Mediator*, yea of
 such a *nature* is the whole obedience and service
 of the *Christian Faith*, as you may clearly see that
 duty on the *matter*, is not enough, where there
 is not a suitableness thereto in the *manner* of fol-
 lowing the same, that the *leading motives and*
principles be purely for God; nor can the way of
 his service be truly followed until his revealed
 Law have an internal efficacy on mens soull; and
 the

as fully e- the *Moral Rule of Gospel Obedience* be turned
 day and into living and inward principles; this is a *Reflec-*
 which are tion I should commend much to your thoughts,
 ese things that hath such irresistible evidence therewith for
 ath surely your establishment in the truth, to see, how that
 and such blest way, which God hath established to bring
 r humane man again to himself, is such as no length in any
 were to external part, or the outworks hereof can bear
 e to draw weight, if there be not a *vital influence* on the
 4. It is soull, nor does its interest ever subsist in the
 hning to World by humane Power or Authority, but by
 elong to an internal establishment of the same from its own
 g that is evidence on the spirits of men. 5. It is here you
 er such a may see likewise, how the whole *Constitutions* of
 ion is to the *Christian Faith* are such, as its *highest Glory*
 mpoleth and *Triumph* here on the earth, is still most con-
 n, but spicuous in the *darkest night of Affliction and*
 oth easily *Trouble*, and in the most remarkable depths
 to be a thereof; this is surely a great discovery, and a
 where strange riddle to nature, which stands in an ex-
 l admi- press opposition to the universal sence of man-
 yea of kind, how this way the Lord does put the highest
 ervices honor on men here on the earth, in the *passive*
 ee that *valour of Christianity*, yea thus puts the most di-
 e there stinguishing marks of respect on his *obscurest Fa-*
 of folk *vourites*;
 es and But there is a **VL INQUIRY**, I must further
 way of direct you to without which no evidences of the
 vealed truth, can be truly effectual on your soull; which
 ; and is on that *wonderful part of Christianity*, that
 the lyes

lyes in the truth of *inward experience*, and is the *very life and soull of our Religion*. The greatness of such a *Subject* makes it more difficult to speak hereon, now in a short *Epistolary Discourse*; but it shall be in as few words as is possible, only to point at such things as may tend to more clear and solid impressions of this *Mystery*, and make way for your own learch and tryall of the same; and I hope I may say they are things, which have not been taken on report. or have found it easy to be satisfied herein, as to a full acquiescence in the truth and assurance thereof; but it's to a few *special ends* I would refer your serious improvement of this *great Inquiry*.

1. For this *end* that a clear *notion and Idea* of *spiritual experience of the things of God*, may be more deeply settled on your spirit, and how in these respects it is to be understood: 1. that God hath directed his *Sacred Truth* unto men not only for *trust*, but for *tryall*, which is a tryall of the nature, & stated on so great and wonderful things that the whole *vital part* of Religion should be a strange and dark thing until you be once entered hereon; they are *blessed who beleeve and have not yet seen* what relates to the *State of Glory above*; but they can never be blest who do not see, as well as beleeve what belongs to the *life and enjoyment of Grace within time*, in the truth of *inward experience*. 2. It is here must be understood the first *Acquaintance of men with the Spirit of God* which

which is an acquaintance of that concern, as the Lord hath laid over the weight of his peoples spiritual joy, refreshment, and support, whilst they are within time, on the same; and is the first entry on converse with spirits, and with God, the Father of spirits, which shall be eternal. 3. It is such, as hath a distinct evidence from any moral influence by the Word or light to the judgment; and is the proper object of spiritual sense, which no humane power, or Angels can impart, but God hath reserved only to himself, who can only make his own love known to the soul, and no report, or testimony of men can doe. 4. It is hereby Christians enter on possession in some degree of divine truth, and these great things promised, as a earnest in hand, to assure them that the rest shall not faill tho it adds no security to the truth of the promise, but for a more abounding assurance to such who receive the same. 5. Tho here be a common, and joint interest amongst Christians; yet must each have his proper, and distinct part in the truth of inward experience, which is his peculiar interest and talent, and it's sure nothing does more work on mens souls; and afford more sweet thoughts then what this way is made there own, to know in themselves the internal demonstrations of the truth they professe, in the power and vertue thereof; and to know what great things hath passed between God and their own soul, and what remarkable times hath gone over

them, and special remarks herein of divine conduct, and his immediate appearance, in the course of their life. 6. It is of that *kind* as none possibly can take on trust, from the testimony of others, or will satisfy without personal tryall, that this be more known to such who *by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil* *Hebr. 5: 14.* 7. But whatever singular use is hereby to the support of our Faith, yet are they not the grounds thereof; since these are only what God hath *spoke in his word*, and not what he hath *done in his work*; tho they are at a great loss who have begun late to observe the same: it is true the greatest *talent*, which is by *inward observation*, and *experiments* which have been most deeply affecting in the present time; does not abide in the same *sense*, and *feeling*, and may be as a *dead stock* upon a Christians hand, without fresh, and immediate supplies; yet are they still the same in the truth thereof, and does ever evidence, how far the enjoyment of grace, and of spiritual estate does exceed the greatest enjoyments of nature. 8. This also must be understood not only by the testimony of inward sense but what comes under the most *exact*, and *judicious tryall*, as to the principles it leans on, without which, there could be no true enjoyment of the same, if they were not as fully satisfied in holding their *experience by right*, as in *possession* and that these great things are no shadowes or ap

pearances, but what is of the highest *truth*, *substance*, and *reality*. 9. It is sure that God is not known in the earth, or enjoyed in *truth*, but in the *light of inward evidence and experience*, except in such a manner of *Balaam*, to see him but not near; but not in the *knowledge of converse*, and *fellowship* with that *God*, whom they profess to know, or what it is to have their soul *inward*, and *familiar* with him, in the experience of such a thing. 10. It is by inward *experience* upon the souls of men, that God doeth in a more special way *secure*, and *preserve*, that *sacred record of his truth* in the World, then by *humane Lawes*, or *authority*; by an *internal conforming* of the spirits of his people, to his revealed truth, whereby the inward man becomes as a *repository* thereof, for when men once become Christians in truth, they are then the *declared Epistle of Christ* by an *indissoluble union* of the truth, and their souls together. I shall but add, that the *experimental part of Religion* is not perfected here, but within a little, there will be an entrance on an *eternity of experience* of what once with admiration, and desire, was hoped for; and the enjoyment of that state above will be no *object of Faith*, but of *sense* and purely *experimental*.

A Second Intent of this Inquiry, should be to clear, how the enjoyment of one Christian in the way of *experience*, may be no *measure*, or *rule* to others in the *tryall of their state*, upon these grounds. 1. That the least *reall evidence* of the

Sanctifying virtue of the truth, bears witness to the truth of a new life, and of *spiritual sense*, and discerning herewith, as a few grapes does difference between a vine, and a bramble. 2. Because the reall Work of God, may be long without the witness thereof, and the first giving of the new life, and a discerning of the same, are distinct acts of the spirit, which doe rarely go together, so as to know when the pulse of this life does begin first to beat. 3. As there are different *sizes*, and growth amongst the Saints within time; so does the talent of experience and inward observation, much differ in the state of some, in respect of others; and does answer to higher conflicts and assaults in a Christians warefare, and higher improvements of grace herein; whence it is that patience brings forth experience, and as it hath so great a room, and service for God; beyond other graces of the spirit, so hath it a great income of reward; by the most rare, and enriching experience of a Christians life; thence is it that these of the highest form of Christians and of the choicest spirit, has been put to a higher exercise thereof, then others, and made to be a more publick blessing by example herein to their Generation. 4. It is clear, the experimental part of Christianity may have respect to some special times, and Periods of mens life, so as one day may be more memorable, then as they have ever known before; yea to such times, when they are put to a higher

higher service in the *tryall of their Faith*, and led unto paths of providence, that might seem untrodden, which hath been usually a time of great *observation* as to a higher light, and evidence on the *experimental tryall of Religion*. 5. This different measure hath respect also, to the *first entry* of Christians on some very dark paths of providence, when the *Lord is to lead, and encline them into a wilderness*, by giving in assurance with a *double measure* on their souls, like *Elijahs call to arise, and eat*, and *Josephs dream twice given*, when his conflicts, and tryalls were to be doubled upon him; yea this may be also on this ground, as it is peculiar to some Christians above others to be kept more close on such a Scent, in that rare exercise to *discern the workings of God on their soull*, and to try the certainty hereof from the *natural work of their own Spirit*; and who may be more exact then others, to *lay up, and record the same*, and not lose the least fragment of such *assurances to their Faith*.

3. This Inquiry should be of special use likewise to know *what great things these are*, to which, the *experimental part of Christianity* does relate, wherein they of the *lowest sise of Christians* have a common, and joint interest whatever difference be in the *degree*; but it is a very short touch I can here give on so great a subject and on some few *Heads*.

1. The translation, and entry of a Christian

unto a new state, and world, here in the earth; is one of the greatest things of experience (tho it hath not a like clear evidence, nor the precise time, and entry can be in the same manner known) for men to know so marvelous a *change* in themselves, and that here is no *illusion* or *dream*; and how it is sure this was never told to mankind but in the *Bible*, which none ever did foresee, or project to themselves; yea which in the very *notion* thereof, was once a *terra incognita* to them; and could have no possible rise from *nature* whose proper work is to *overcome nature*. I know this may seeme astonishing, and not easie for many to bear, that professed Christians may have the same need to be converted to Christianity that *Pagans* have, or perish, that the letter of the word only, or any length in external duties can save none, who know nothing of internal evidence, or the spiritual Powers of Christianity.

2. It does relate to this *Head*, to know that *God and his People here in the World, are no strangers to other in the truth, and enjoiment of communion with him*, for as this is ane essential part of our *Faith*, and one of the most sure, and established *constitutions* of our *Religion*, by ane *unalterable rule*, so is it matter of undoubted enjoiment, without which a Christians *course*, and *passage* through time were *unpassible*; it is true this is so great a thing as may make the most experienced Christian to be a wonder to himself, and is not a *subject* of ordinary thoughts. 3. To

3. To this belongs also the *truth*; and enjoyment of *supernatural comforts here on the earth* such as *peace immediatly from God*, and the *joys of the Holy Ghost*, which can have no possible rise from nature, and was never known to men, but on this tryall of experience, that such a thing is sure, with respect unto which the *highest experiments of nature* are low, and of mean concern; yea which are comforts of that kind, as can be only known by its contrary, and hath been still more ouweing to the *foreſt conflicts*, then to the *sweetest calm* of a *Christians life*, and such as the elect Angels did never know or partake of.

4. The *prevalency of prayer with God*, and to know with assured evidence both the *acceptance hereof in Heaven*, and the *returns thereof upon the earth*, is also one of these great things of experience, and can never be known else as a subject of contemplation only, which hath been direct of the Lord as a prescript for such ones where no humane wisdom or power could possibly answer; and is not bounded by the most desperate case, which would seem to shut out all hope and encouragement. But as to this I must say how little seemes that part of our Religion, tho one of the most wonderful parts thereof to be improven in that manner now as in former times, and in the most extraordinary exigences which Christians have been in, yea how low a trade is it which by most this day is carried on, in so marvelous a way

as this, which the Lord hath established betwixt *heaven and earth*, and hath such immediate correspondence with the whole *inward life*, and *virtalls of Christianity*, to preserve and strengthen the same.

A 5. Head on this Subject to be matter of great thoughts and *reflection* is this, that here on the earth there is such a thing to be enjoyed in the truth and certainty of *experience*, as an *earnest and seall of the Spirit of God* 2 Corinth 1: 22. *who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts* Ephes. 1: 13. *in whom also after that ye beleevd, ye were sealed by that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance* &c. 2 Corinth. 5: 5. *now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who hath also given us the earnest of his Spirit.* I know there hath been much inquiry on this Subject, as to a clear sence, and judgment thereof, both by *Schoolmen*, and *Practical Writers*, tho it is such a thing as must needs be a strange, and dark riddle where the *Spirit of God* is not the *Interpreter*; and some near entercourse with this great teacher, that in his light we may see light; but that it is surely promised of God, and could never have entred on mens thoughts, if it were not purely a divine Revelation, none will offer to question; and that the experience of the same in all times of the Church, hath no less tendency to confirm and seall the truth of Christianity,

then

then it hath to confirm a Christians state; but though I doubt not your acquaintance herewith is beyond many, yet this beeing a truth of such high concern, so far as I have attained, I would offer somelight hereon, wherein my soul hath found *rest and settlement*, as to a clear sence and conception of the same. 1. That how rare soever the experience of this may be this day, yet is it not the peculiar priviledge of some *few, select, and eminent Christians*, or what God does rarely impart and on some singular account to his people, but is the settled priviledge of all who are *led by the Spirit*, and under his conduct. 2. This is ane experiment of the *Christian Faith*, which no humane testimony or vocal evidence can express, that which is *inward*, and a secret betwixt God and the soul, or what *taste that hidden Manna* hath Rev. 2: 17. *which none knowes but he that enjoys the same*; for this is not the promise, which is given to be the *object of our Faith*, but is the *seall of the Spirit of promise*, and the *proper object of spiritual sence*; it is an internal work which goes above words, and such as God alone can impart, who only can reveal his own love to the soul, and *Shed abroad the sence hereof*, and hath reserved this to himself; it is that also which gives a distinct evidence from any moral influence of the word, tho it can never be disjoined, and divided from the same, but is such ane internal application hereof, as puts their souls to rest and quiet

thereon. 3. It is here must be understood a more near and solemn approach of God, and some higher enjoyment of Spiritual Sense, then is usually known which will make such a time remarkable, and sweet to a Christians after remembrance, tho some in, a more extraordinary way, and higher degree, may have this imparted then others, as the tryall of their Faith hath been more heightned, and hath attained to higher aſtings of grace under the same, according to that settled *Connection* *Isay 57: 12.* I doubt not, there may be high pretences to this *Seall and earnest*, who know little what in the way and order of grace is required to prepare, and qualifie for the same, but except the settled constitutions of the Gospel, should be changed for their sake; it is then sure that God did never seall the comforts of his Spirit, or his respects and approving testimony on such, who are of an untender, unhumbled, and vindictive spirit, and is no more possible, then as *Job 18: 4.* *That the earth should be forsaken for them, and the rock removed out of its place.* 4. It is true this is more clearly understood by such, who by reason of use, have their senses exercised both to discern good, and evill *Hebrews 5: 14.* and have thus attained a more deep, and judicious reflection, for the tryall of the same, since this is usually one of the most searching exercises of a Christian, to discern the voice of the Spirit of God, and know the same, from that of a Stranger, and
to come

to come to the light herein, to see that such a *seall*, or any rare enjoiments of that kind, are assuredly from God, and wrought in him *John 3: 21*. It is clear also how, many *sharp conflicts*, and a *botter warfare* are allotted to some of the Saints, then others, under griefs, troubles, and oppositions in their Christian course, hath made way at so dear a rate for their acquaintance with the same, so as the gradual difference, in the truth of this experiment, may be strange, and marvelous, and cause fear to impart the same, nor be ever known within time. 5. Tho it is sure, that all who are entred in a *reconciled state with God*, must be *sealed by the Spirit*, yet is not this to be understood as the ordinar food, and dyet of a Christian, but as some more special *restorative*, and *cordial*. so as one enjoiment of this kind, hath been sometimes so remarkable, that through the whole course of a Christians life after, it hath been a continued strenthning to their Faith; yet is it no rare thing to these who are kepted in a more near intimacy of converse with God, to whom, the truth of this *seall* not once, but in innumerable times, hath been known, who, on the other hand does know also, how long, and sensible restraint of this great enjoiment may be, when the choicest promises of the Word, can afford no comfort, but when the *premises are clear*, the *conclusion is oft suspended through hid jealousies*, and *legall fears of the spirit of bondage*. 6. It is sure this
blessed

blessed *seall* lyes here also, in some special *direction*
work of the Spirit of God, to make use of *light*, in
 particular cases with assurance, and quiet of mind,
 and in sealing instruction with that evidence, and
 power on the soull, as leaves such a *print* and im-
 pression thereon as the *seall* leaves on the *wax*,
 this can be no strange, or unknown thing to those
 who in a close adherence, to Scripture light hath
 been specially tender to try the same thereby, and
 under a just horror, and dread of *Enthusiasm*
 or the smallest dashing on such a rock 7. But
 it is specially discernable, where this *seall* and
earnest hath been more abundantly let forth to
 some beyond others; that it was for some higher
 support to their Faith, where a long interval of
delay was to be between the *promise*, and perfor-
 ment, and such a tryall of a *deferred hope* herein,
 as might be ready to make their heart sick into
 death, if the Lord had not given such a *pledge*
 and *part in hand* to assure them that the rest shall
 not faill in due time, now this is so manifest in
 the *conduct*, and *methods* of grace, about the Saints
 under the *old Testament*, and in how singular a way
 he did first *seall*, before he entred them upon any
 great tryalls, and which were to be of a long du-
 ration, as there needs no particular instances to
 clear the same. 8. It is here; the sence of that
hundred fold, which Christ hath so expressly se-
 cured to his People on the adventures of their
 Faith may be understood, as that which assured-
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ly lyes in these rare enjoinments of the spirit, and inward sense of the love of their God, in the shinings of his face on them, which are the *first fruits of the Spirit*; more then in any external providence, or these things which are of the highest value with men; since as this is the most sure and greatest evidence that we are Christians, so is it the most notable *sign* how dear such are to God, and of his *love and favour*, then if he had given them the whole World. I know nothing will seem more strange, and disrelishing to the spirit of most this day then such a thing, but *wisdom is justified of her Children*, and with such let my soul be joined in. 9. As it is known and sure that here is no *illusion or imaginary thing*, where any *fallacy or deceit* lyes, to the most judicious and observing Christians, who knows herein, what makes them glad; and whence it is, and how no assistance of their own spirit, or in the power of nature could possibly impart such a thing; so may it be astonishing how such who live under the Profession of Christ, and hath any design on an eternal state in Heaven, can take this on report, or be so little inquisitive about so wonderful a truth, that there should be such an enjoinment here on the earth, which without any *natural cause*, can put the soul of men into an entire rest, and settlement, and when under greatest *shakings and fears* otherways, cause them know the truth of *pardon*, and *peace with God* with a sure evidence,

evidence, yea at so low an ebb can immediately revive and raise with so discernable a change in their inward case; for if this be an undoubted matter of experience it should be not easie for men to live without tryall hereof themselves.

10. Let me *add* further, here is a part of that *communion* which Christians have within time, with the most *excellent of the earth*; and such who in all *ages of the Church* have been the greatest lovers of God, and adventurers for him; such with whom he hath been most familiar, and hath admit not only to the *allowance of Subjects*, but the regard of *favourites*, who hath known how great a *Rewarder* he is of his own *grace*, yea such, who have made the most exact *inquiry* and *tryall*, upon the truth and security of their comfort herein, and hath put to their *seall* that God is *faithfull and true*, in that he hath thus *promised*.

4. There is this *special use* to be made of such an *enquiry* on the truth of *inward experience*, to see how great, and wonderful a *Subject* we have for reflection hereon; and of what singular advantage this should be for strengthening the soul of a Christian, against the workings of *unbeleef*, and to give a more full security of mind in the adventures of hope and reliance upon God, for things to come. It is sure the *reflex faculty of man* is one of the greatest *wonders of nature*, and if the *spiritual use*, and improvement hereof were more understood on this *Subject*, and what it is to dive in
to the

to these still and deep waters, it might make such be oft as a *wonder* to themselves. I shall but point at a few *reflex acts* of a Christian on this great mystery of spiritual experience, to shew what manner of *enjoiments*, these are admit to herein, which the whole residue of mankind knows nothing of. 1. To have such great supernatural truths of the Scripture, which did once exceed their faith, and reason, to be now matter of undoubted *experience* in the truth, power, and efficacy hereof on their own souls; and thus to know what belongs to the enjoiments of spiritual sence, which formerly seemed so darke and incomprehensible a thing, yea how great a *difference* there is betwixt the clearest *Acts of the Judgement*, and *understanding* about *divine things*; and a reall *feeling* of the same in the *power*, and *vertue* thereof; betwixt the most sublime apprehensions by *theory*; and the *sensible impressions*, by the *Holy Ghost*, and what a present, and marvelous change this makes on the soull of a Christian. 2. To enjoy the same no less under a full *evidence*, and *certainty* of the truth thereof as *the alone*, and *immediate Work of God*, then in their felt power and sweetnesse; & that here was no *casual thing*, or matter of doubtfulness or uncertainty, but where they can clearly see the *object* of their *faith* on the *truth of divine Revelation*, now to be the *object* of there *inward Sence*, and *enjoyment*; and are sure that what *God hath spoken*, he *hath done*

according to the same; for if this be not clear; *Spiritual comforts* would be of low value if it were not with that evidence, and assurance of being *Gods seall*, as they could adventure their eternal state on the truth hereof. 3. And how sweet a part is it, when they can thus reflect on their own experience, and enjoy the same with no less evidence of the proper cause, and original, then of the truth of its effects, which is one of the greatest helps to give stability, and assurance to our Faith; to see how the power of Religion is never barren of new experiments of the truth hereof, how the greatest objective means in the way of light cannot doe, if there were not an Internal effective cause, that works powerfully herein, and as in nature, so in the way of grace, how the same cause, which makes us live, must make us move, and act, yea to see how the same spirit that confirms a Christian on the truth of his state, and of the enjoyments of grace here, does confirm Christianity, and the enjoyments of glory, which must infallibly follow the same, and ere long be a matter of their experience also. 4. To know this way, that surely a nearer intimacy is to be enjoyed with God, and of a higher kind, which is by the communion of the Holy Ghost, then by the immediate ministry of the Angels, yea a greater evidence thus given to a Christians soul, then by any external miracles; since this is a seall of that nature, as is given to none, but such as are the objects of the divine complacence

placence and delight; and its sure the alone greatest evidence of divine love lyes in the *internal part of Christianity*, and these immediate operations of the Spirit of God, more then by any external providences. 5. To see, how these great things of *experience*, come under a *present tryall*, and given to be experienced here on the *earth*, and are not some *rare contingency*, or what may be stated on an *extraordinary* account, but does keep close with a *tender walk*, and near enters with God through a Christians whole course; and thus knows what such an *anointing with fresh oyl* means *Psalms 92: 10.* by innumerable reiterated times of such enjoinment; yea how the sense and sweetness thereof comes not then by the *power*, and *workings of reason*; but the *immediateness of the divine presence*, tho even then it does not exclude such a *discursive work*, in the clearness of *Spiritual reason*, and *light*, as can fully quiet the mind, that here is no *illusion*, or *deceit*; but lets us see, that the Spirit of God can make use of an *argument* to settle, and secure the soul when all essays, whither from themselves, or others can give no releas. 6. Thus are they admitt to see herewith, how deep the foundation of our *comfort*, and *security*, is layd on the *faithfulness of God* in his revealed truth, so as the whole *frame of Christianity* must be dissolved, and fall ere one special act of trust, and adventure on his hand, and under the assured warrant of his

truth, should be frustrate; and that the *safe conduct* also, and *security* of one Christian, in his passage through time, is of that consequence, and so essential a part of the great frame of providence, that this should not be entire, and perfect if it should fail, as to the meanest of the Saints, to make so great a nullity herein. 7. And is it not, in such a reflex work on the truth of experience, that such can only know the *sweet enjoyments* of *times past*, and what that peculiar comfort of *remembrance* means; which I must reckon one of the rarest, and most unknown enjoyments this day under the Sun; since it is sure, this can never be from the *greatest delights* of the earth, when once passed, which as they return no more, so does ever leav a bitter sting, and *remembrance*, by a native result of the same; whilst that which hath been experienced in the way of God, can neither *perish*, nor lose its *sweetness*, but will render the most *afflicting part* of their life past, which was most bitter, and soe then, to be the most *comforting part* thereof to their remembrance, when they can see herein both what they have *designed* for God, and he hath *done* for them. 8. If there be any comfort of love, in the *Communion* of the Saints here within time, they may see how this is not attainable, but in the *light* of inward experience whence they know, what it is to meet, and have fellowship in the same *Saviour*, and *relish* of the things of God, when in a spiritual frame, and

and to be *mutually disclosed* as they can discern something of the excellency of one another's *spirit*, and of the power, and lively workings of *inward grace*, by that *native lustre, and evidence*, which thus follows the same; so as under the sensible power of such *attractions* their souls are more closely unite, and joined together, yea are mutually strengthened by other conflicts, and what experiments they have made of divine truth herein as to their relief. And I must say where this is not understood, that great *mystery of the Communion of the Saints*, is but a *strange and dark notion*; nor without this can that special design of the Lord in the *settlement of Churches in a visible state*, be either known or answered, which is to have external ordinances carried on with life, and power amongst men, and enjoying communion with our *blessed head* herein.

The VII. and last INQUIRY. I would make as to a more full assurance of understanding on the truth of our profession, and for further clearing of this great *Subject of the experimental part of Religion*, is to know the *quality of the witnesses* there to, which is an *Inquiry* of a higher concern and import then seems to be apprehended, or of what weight, and necessity this is, upon these *grounds*.

I. Because the whole truth of *Spiritual experience* is matter of *fact*, and founded on a *certain-ty of sense*, it is truth in the event and perfor-

mance, and not what God does *ſpeak*, but what according to the ſame he hath done; ſo that this is not upon any principle of Faith, but on mens perſonal tryall of the ſame, according to that *Iſai. 43: v. 10. ye are my witneſſ ſays the Lord, that ye may know, and beleeveme, and underſtand that I am he;* for tho it is of divine, and infallible truth, that whatever God hath *affured by promiſe* he will do; yet the experience hereof, ſince the *Canon of the Scripture was ſealed*, is of humane record, and a *teſtimony* which could bear no weight from the greateſt of men, if the *quality of ſuch witneſſes* were not tried, and conſidered herein. 2. Becauſe the higheſt pretence to ſpiri- tual enjoiments in the way of the *promiſe* is but a falſe teſtimony, where there is no tender regard herewith to the *precepts of the Goſpel*, when this connection is indiſſoluble *Act 9. they walked in the fear of God, and comforts of the Holy Ghoſt; doe not my words good to them that walk uprightly Mica 2: 7.* It is true, that choiſeſt Chriſtians may be much hid, and in the dark herein to others, and upon ſuch an account ſhould have a ſad part, if they were tryed, and judged by men; only this is ſure, there can be no more in the *concluſion* then is in the *premiſes*, and that a Chriſtians *teſti- mony* to the truth lyes more in *what they are*, then *what they expreſſ to others*. 3. The *quality of the witneſſes* is of ſuch weight here, and to be ſpecially regarded, as one of the *higheſt ſervices* for

for God within time under their hand, to put too their
 seall, and testimony that God is true in what he
 hath promised; who are as it were judicially sifted
 in behalf of his truth and faithfulness; since his
 declarative glory before angels, and men, does
 more peculiarly ly here then in the whole Stru-
 cture, and frame of this Creation. This is a trust
 and debt also upon each age of the Church, that
 the truth and faithfulness of their God may be trans-
 mitt to the generations to come with such a confir-
 matory seall. 4. This Inquiry is the more called
 for, to know what these are who bear such a wit-
 nes to the truth, upon the exceeding greatnes of
 these things which belong to Christian experience,
 since this might awake the most sublime, and in-
 quisitive spirits of the time to search herein, and
 be a Subject of great thoughts and reflection, that
 such are on the earth, yea an innumerable part of
 men, who do verily enjoy so marvelous a light as
 is immediatly out of Heaven, and shines upon
 none else; and knowes such an enjoiment, as an
 immediate communion with the Deity, and his
 sensible presence with their Spirits, with returns
 from Heaven to their suits in most reall effects;
 since if this be sure, then must men seek for an-
 other Idea of Christianity, & have other thoughts
 about the same, then what most seem to have;
 then is there a higher glory put upon mens souls
 in the way of grace, and their beeing partakers of
 the divine nature, then what all humane gran-

deur can ever amount to, or is upon the Sun, and the Stars of Heaven. 5. The *credit*, and *quality* of the *Witnesses* on this great head of *Spiritual* experience, and the whole *internal* part of *Christianity* is of such weight that the spirit of this age, and most predominant part of men within the Church is stated in so visible an opposition thereto, not only to oppose the *power*, and *spirituality* of Religion, but to deny its *principles*, and give a lye to this testimony, of the most eminent workings of the spirit of God on mens souls, as it it were some *illusion* or *imposture*; which is in effect to take of the *greatest* seal that God hath given to the *Divinity* of the *Scripture* in the whole *internal* demonstrations of its truth: this is the great prodigy of this age beyond any times past, and may be feared it our Faith stood not sure otherways, that the light should be quickly extinguished, and the candlestick taken away from most of the reformed Churches; when most, under such a profession yet never knew, the *power*, *vertue*, and *efficacy* of the truth they profess on their own soul, and that there is another evidence or teaching, then by *moral* *swasion* only, or another key to open the heart, then *external* means; and thus must either oppose themselves to so tormenting a light, or be unavoidably condemned hereby.

But with this *Inquiry* as to the *credit* and *quality* of the *witnesses*, who in all ages of the Church bears the same testimony to the truth from their

experience, it is undenyable also, but that there are some in a more singular way sifted, and under more peculiar engagements: then others to appear on such a testimony, and who may be admit to enjoyments of experience, that are out of the ordinary road of Gods dealing with his people, tho this must in no other sense be understood extraordinary; then from so judicial a time as this, and the great decay of the Power of Christianity with this generation why these are so rare, and not in being any way cross to the firm and settled constitutions of the Gospel, or without that precinct of the promise of God to warrant the same; and I hope the Church of Christ is yet to enter on such enjoyments of experience that would not be easie to believe in this day we are in, were they told us at a distance. But what I mean hereby of these, who may be in a higher capacity then others for such a witness I shall breefly touch.

1. These who through grace hath been admit to some higher intimacy of converse with God, and to know his dealing familiarly with men here on the earth, then may be ever known in such a degree to other choise, and real Christians; tho I judge this may be more rarely known, that where it is most in truth; there also is a humble concealment, and being hid in the same, their usual studie, who finds more sweetness in such enjoyments the less air they take; & I have oft thought such may be least known on the earth in this day

who may be the greatest *favourits of Heaven*, and have had most rare, and immediate *testimonies of the love, and respects of their God*; but as this is not the *Standard* by which the truth, and reality of grace is to be judged; so should this *witness* be to me no further *strengthening*, then it hath some greater height in *humility, and tenderness of Spirit* in the ways of God going alongst herewith, and some more singular eminency of grace as does answer to that *Isai 57: 15. John 14: 21.*

2. I must judge these also have a *higher room* in this *witness for God* on their experience of his truth, who have in a more singular way then others known the truth of *supernatural assistance, and sustaining grace* under extraordinary tryalls. I mean such Christians as have been tryed not only in the truth, but in the *strength of divine grace*, at another rate then others, whom I must reckon amongst the greatest *witnesses for God* in this day, when 1. This renders their *testimony* to be of a higher value and evidence according to the height, and measure of their *conflicts, and tryalls*, whom thus the Lord hath choised, and separate as *Joseph* was from the residue of his brethren, for such a service of example, that the excellency of his grace might here more brightly shine forth.

2. Because the *deposition* herein, is in a matter on which most doe stumble at the ways of God, upon that scandal of the cross; and on this account it may be said; they are sent as *messengers*, and

and *spyes*, to witness what manner of allowance he does then impart, to bear the expence of a more extraordinary time of affliction, and suffering, and what immediate support is then found above the allowance of ordinary times; that with *Caleb*, and *Joshua*, they might bear a honourable report for God unto others. 3. The credit of this *testimony* riseth the higher, as it hath cost them so dear, who bear the same, and hath not been easily attained, nor is an *offering unto God of that which costs them nothing*, who have been helped beyond others to glorify him in the fires. 4. They are such above the residue of Christians, who hath usually a record of more *special confirmations*, and great remarks of the way of God, in the *Journal*, and *History of their life*; I know most would fear to have a room in such a testimony, but as I doubt not there are many such *witnesses* this day in the earth, so I must reckon it, one of the most honourable services for God upon it, and will ere long know the full sence of that truth; when he hath tried them to bring them forth as gold *Job 23: 10.*

3. And are not such specially sifted as *witnesses* herein, and under more *singular engagements* than others, who upon greater *Services* for God assigned to them, hath also had more then ordinary allowances, of immediate *divine assistance* for the same, to witness that they have not been sent hereon on their own *charge*, and *expence*;

this is one of the great discoveries that the Lord gives unto men of his beeing God, and is a clear, and demonstrative evidence of that reall, and near communication, which the *Churches head* hath with his *body* here on the earth. I know this hath a special respect to such, as are called of the Lord on that *Service of the Ministry of his Word*, who hath some peculiar, and distinct part allotted to them as *witnesses*, and put on a more publick *theater* before the World, to witness that absolute dependance, which the work, and service of that *station* hath on their great *Master*, and the *outlettings* of his Spirit both for support, and success, and what thus is found in the way of an immediate relyance on him; for I must judge that none knowes a near entercourse with God, and to be purely acted for him, on this great service, but hath some peculiar advantage beyond any else for more singular, and rare confirmations of the truth on their own soul, and of a known, and sensible *saall* from God both in *frust*, and acceptance of their work; and tho such who look at a distance, cannot discern, what may be betwixt God, and his Servants, in some publick administrations of his service, as may be then evident to their soul, yet is it oft made so far discernible, as to serve an awful sence and impression on mens spirits, of God in the *Assemblies of his Church*, and of the truth of supernatural assistances, and something more then humane herein; nor does such a

witnesses ever cease, tho it be now more rare then in times past, in this sad and judicial period of time, we are fallen in, when almost all sence, savour, and discerning of the Spirit of God, with publick administrations of the Word, seems lost, & the wisdom of Words, or what may appear more neat or polished that way, is come in the room hereof, as though the alone end, of so high a service were to act a scene handsomly on a theater that may carry the applause of the Spectators, but not men's hearts unto God; this I have lookt on with no less horror then on the most visible Atheism, and profanity of these times, and one of the most dismal Signs in the publick state of Religion.

4. These also may have some higher access for such a witness, who know with evidence, the truth of immediate, and supernatural excitements, to engage upon some special work, and service for God, and to be acted forth herein under the power, and irresistible discovery of one inward call, when under greatest oppositions from their own spirit thereto, and furthest aversion of mind. This I have known in the truth hereof in most eminent examples, but the credit of such a testimony, tho in it self, founded on divine Revelation, does necessarily require such an evidence of the quality of the witnesses herein; that they be of a known tender, humble, and judicious Spirit, who are skilled both in the deep things of God, and in the deeps of Satan, who this way does

does oft act in the greatest deep, and mystery of delusion.

5. There is yet something more *singular* in the experience of some Christians beyond others, and in such a *witness*, as to a *special confidence*, and *assuranceraised on their soul*, of events of providence, and the issue of some remarkable case of tryall, when it hath been contrare to all humane appearances, and no reason from any visible airth could be given for the same; this I know may seem a strange thing in the eyes of many, nor can it possibly have that *evidence*, or in that manner work to others, as it is to these, who know, and have experienced the same, but we see, and are sure there hath been great attainments of such a Faith, both in *Scripture examples*, and *uncontroverted experiments*, made hereof in after times, which hath met such in the road of their duty, and in ane expresse harmony, and correspondence with the Word, since the *extent of our Faith in any particular case*, must keep with the same *extent, and measure of divine Revelation* herein, and the Lord will be *trusted for no more then he hath made warrantable by his promise*. But this is a *Subject*, on which I may not insist further then to clear the *evidence and truth of the same on these grounds*. 1. That Christians may be at such *steps in their way and passage through time*, and on so dark ground; yea the *ride of difficulties*, and *amasing fears* swelled to so great a height, that
if there

if there were not a support of this kind, by an *argument of power*, to their soul, they should otherways be ready to sink. 2. This *experiment* how rare so ever it may seem to many, is no *dark*, or *distinct thing* from that *seal of the spirit of promise*, which we should look after; or from that *promised earnest*, which sometimes the Lord gives, with respect to a *special mercy*, and *deliverance* within time as well as their *great interest in Heaven*, tho it be not in the same *degree* imparted to some as to others. 3. It is also of no other kind then that settled allowance on the *Saints*, of the *peace of God* in such a measure as can raise, and fully quiet their spirit, above any sinking fears, and above the *present assault* they may be under, tho with such evidence then, as is not possible to attain at other times, nor can be kept clear, and comforting to themselves without much *tenderneſſe of spirit and fear*. 4. Where this is known, and enjoyed in any higher degree by some then may be the allowance of others, it is assuredly found on a *special & near intimacy with God*, and to follow some discernable access, and *special gale of the spirit of intercession in prayer, and wrestlings*; so as it thus meets them in the way of a settled ordinance, and in the same way wherein we may see the Saints in Scripture have attained to a confidence of this kind; for otherways there could be no comforting evidence of its being the undoubted *work of God*. 5. And here
must

must be tryed, & sought for, whether the more *immediate testimony of God*, does then still bring the *testimony of the renewed conscience* alongst therewith so as to clear the condition in themselves, and their claim thereto, of such a special promise, whereon their confidence hath been raised, whereby it is thus rendred to them an *absolute promise*, that can not possibly be frustrate. 6. I shall but add further as this *rare experiment* comes with such *evidence of spiritual sense*, as is discernable from any *natural workings* of mans own heart, and is that wherein the most deep enquiry and judicious tryall of Christians is needful to know that its surely from God, and hath both his *warrant*, and *seal* herewith, so is it not strange that where he takes a more *singular way* to try and exercise some, and out of the ordinar road of his dealing with others, yea where support in the way of *external providence* may then cease, that this special allowance by *inward evidence* be something more singular also, and some *higher influence of the spirit and power of beleeving* be imparted for such a case:

This leads me to offer some thoughts in the close upon two *Proposals*, which I did not intend, if from another *airth*, whilst I was writing this there had not occurred a *special call* herein, and that I judged it might not be unsuitable to the *intent of this discourse*.

I. Whither there be any such *seal* to the truth
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of Christianity in these times we are now in as the Faith of Miracles, or that it be warrantable to expect such a thing from God, which lyes in a particular act of trust in some special case, where a Christian may be taken off all ordinarie means, and nothing but a divine immediate, and miraculous Power can answer thereto; for Answer it is clear the active Faith hereof which was once given to the Primitive Church in the workings of miracles now ceaseth, but in this passive Sence, I know no time, nor age, to which it does not belong, and comes not under the Promise of God, to warrant the same in these cases.

1. When the Lord measures out such tryalls to any of his people in the way of their duty, and under his special conduct, where there is no relief, or support, but in the Faith of an extraordinary, and immediate appearance of God, and no neglect in the least; of what in the way of ordinarie, and warrantable means is attainable, it is sure, there it is both warranted and requires such a Faith, yea are put by a more singular call on the tryall of the same, and in this respect; I doubt not there hath been, and may yet be in the present age greater attainments of the same, then most of Christians can easily comprehend, whose tryalls were never brought to such a pitch, and in that manner assigned to them; since these are of the Lord measured out only according to the measure of Faith given them Rom. 12: 3.

2. As none may *abridge the Spirit of God in the freedome, and Soveraignty of his work* herein, whatever times men be in, so is it known and clear, that where the Lord does allott more *extraordinary cases* whither to Churches or particular Christians, when such are keeping close by him, and the revealed rule of their duty, there also is a more *extraordinary allowance* for the same, yea such a *measure and encrease of their Faith* to be sought from the great author thereof, as may answer the present case, to have their *strength* according to their day.

3. It is unquestionable that the Lord designs in all *ages of his Church*, to bring glory to himself, by such a *faith as hath no ground to grip on*, but an *infinite and immediate power* that can extend it self to the most desperate and amasing case, nor is a *beleeving in hope*, when it is to be furthest against hope, a strange and dark thing in this day, either as to the warrant hereof, or these proofs, which have been made of the same in the issue. And herein I must judge the appearance of God no less wonderful to some of his people in that which he *works in them*, and in that deliverance from their *fears* where no *humane Reason or Secondary causes* could concurr, then in that which he hath done for them in the most *stupendious acts of Providence*, nor does any time want some share and proper *talent* of this kinde, if such *great appearances of God* were more observed, that
might

might be singularly strengthening to the *Christian Faith*.

4. Is there a reall Christian this day, who is not called to such a *Faith*, that he shall once upon himself experience a greater miracle by a *divine omnipotent Power* then was yet ever wrought in the earth, which is of the *Resurrection of his body*, after it hath been for some ages dissolved into dust, wherein it is, by the undoubted *Faith of miracles* to be wrought upon himself, that his greatest support and comfort within time stands; yea if there be such a *Faith* in the earth, which is now still warranted, as that we have *Pf. 46: 12*: it must then ly in an *actual trust*, and reliance in a case where a miracle can only help.

5. If possessions by the Devil were in that manner now usual as in the *primitive times*, it is undeniable, that the *Prayer of Faith* herein for *dispossession* were not only warranted, but expressly called for, tho the *inward assurance* of such a *Faith* may not in the same manner be given to some as to others; yet here is a special suiting from God the proof of a miracle, by his immediate *Power*, which they are in faith called too; and as that *Prescript* given by our Lord of *fasting and prayer* for this end does still stand in force to hath there been known publick instances in these late times, of reall dispossessions by prayer, and solemn addresses to Heaven herein.

6. If the oppressed innocence of a *Christian*, and in

such a case where the honor of God were highly concerned, should be so stated, as to be beyond humane relief for clearing the same, there might be herein an unquestionable reference to God, for his more *immediate decision*, and a warrantable ground to suit for the *spirit of faith in such a measure*, as so extraordinary a tryall requires, beyond what in an ordinar case is allowable, but so as to wait for the same, in his season and way. This I know was in the *primitive times* in some more singular manner made use off, when no ordinar means was attainable for the same, but as that could have no safe warrant, so the *Law of jealousy*, and tryall by the *waters of jealousy* Numb. 5. was then temporary and is now cealed; yet is this still *moral* herein and of *perpetual use*, that, God is the same who hath reserved to himself an immediate appearance of himself, when no ordinar means can help; yea that *promise* Ps. 57:3. is expressly given for such an end of *his sending from Heaven* immediatly to save, where no assistance on the earth is attainable, and all natural means fail.

7. It is unquestionable that the making use of *Lots* (which in such a case is only safe, where it is rendred absolutely necessar for a *final determination in some great, and weightie concern*) is such a *solemn appeal to ane extraordinary decision of God*, as the faith of his appearance by a *present, and immediate sign from himself* is necessarily required,

required, tho it be not by any strange or *miraculous evidence* yet is as truly to be taken from God in such a case, and in *faith* subjected to, as if some *supernatural sign* did accompany the same, and as no *humane wisdom or counsel* can have place herein as to the *event*, so I must judge an entire acquiescence of mens spirits on such a determination, shewes not only a deep and reverent *Serce of the Majesty of God*, but that this is as truly his answer, as if they had seen *fire coming down from Heaven to consume the Sacrifice*, as was in the days of *Elijah* at mount Carmel.

8. It may be said that the truth of such a *faith* hath in a special evidence, and power hereof been known when things have come to some *unusual extremity in a Christians case*, as could bear no delay but like that of the *Disciples of Christ*, *help Lord ere we perish*; instances of this kind have been so clear as, I judge, is not possible to deny the truth of such a *seall to the Faith of Christians*, were things of that nature more adverted to and
 „ observed. It is a few years past, that a famous
 „ *Minister of Christ*, who now is at rest in the
 „ *Lord*, was under such an extraordinary pain
 „ and torment by a confirmed stone in the gravel,
 „ as nature sunk wholly under the same, and as
 „ he shewed me was brought to that extremity,
 „ that he turned to God with such a cry, let not
 „ *thy servant distract, but help, for I can possi-*
 „ *bly bear no more*, who said also that in the very

„ present moment it was immediatly taken off,
 „ and this at once, with a perfect ease and releas,
 „ and did recurr no more till the day of his *death*,
 „ which was sometime after: this as I had from
 „ *himself*, so was it from one that none in the
 „ *age* he lived in, I could have credited more,
 „ and could leave no room for doubting that such
 „ a *return in the present act of prayer*, at so great a
 „ height, and *extremity of pain*, without any
 „ *natural cause* and mean, was immediatly from
 „ God, and *supernatural*. I knew also with assu-
 „ rance such an *instance*, in a *Minister of the Gos-
 „ pel*, who was seized in the *Sabbath morning*, with
 „ an *extraordinar collick*, which grew upon him,
 „ to that height, as in an ordinarie way rendred it
 „ not possible to go forth upon the publick work of
 „ the day, which then lay upon him, and to a great
 „ *Auditory* at that time, so that whilst he essayed
 „ to *rise*, he was pressed to take his *bed* again, a
 „ very few minutes before the sett time for going
 „ to *Church*, but whilst he presented the case to
 „ God, upon the interest of his service, it was
 „ in a *moment taken off*, not by any *gradual ab-
 „ atement of such a distemper*, but entirely at
 „ *once*, so as he never had more sweet access and
 „ freedome to go forth on the work of the Lord
 „ both at that *dye*, and in the following part of
 „ the *publick work*; and this also was, when no
 „ outward mean was concurring herein; as it is
 „ clear, that the *passive Faith*, which *Christ* did
 „ spe-

ſpecially require for an *immediate cure* from himſelf *Matth. 9* was this, *beleeveſt thou that I am able to help*, when no ordinarie means can do; ſo I doubt not this was in ſome meaſure acted in both theſe inſtances, leaving roome for omnipotency to act in ſuch an exigence.

9 Nor hath there been wanting eminent proofs of this kind, of ſpecial *applications of Faith*, made unto God by *prayer* in behalf of others under *difeaſes*; where ordinarie means hath been laid aſide, and the *caſe* paſt all hope, and of ſuch *returns* by a preſent reſtoring, and under ſuch evidence as enforced the conviction hereof, upon mens conſcience that we may ſee how in ſome *ſtrange caſes* of this kind the true *cauſe*, and the *Lords deſign* herein does not untill then break up, according to that *John 9: 3. That the work of God might be ſeene made manifeſt in them.*

10 I may further add, if there were this day a *new erection*, and *ſettlement of ſome particular Church from amongſt Infidells*, and the commiſſion for this end of *Minifters of Chriſt* made evident, and clear to go forth on ſuch a ſervice, where no *natural and ordinarie means* of conviction were attainable, I doubt not but ſomething in a more extraordinary way, of the *faith of miracles*, and *immediate appearances of God* herein might be expected, as in the *primitive times*, when on the ſame ground it was lett forth. Nor can it be found there hath been any *particular*

Church of Christ without some *extraordinary* *seall* of this kind, especially in the first *entry* and *erection* of the same; nor is there any *time* or *age* of the Church, wherein the clear sence of that *Scripture Mark 9: 23.* — *all things are possible to them that beleeve*, does not take place: which is that no measure of tryall or difficulties, whither as to *Churches* or particular *Christians* in the way of their duty, can be at such an height, as to restrain or sett bounds to the *work of Faith* on an infinite *divine power*, tho all natural or second causes should cease, yea that there is no case so singular, wherein the *warrant of a divine Promise* herein, and a *Christians Faith*, should not be of the same extent.

The 11. *Proposal* that I shall breefly touch, as it thus followes upon the former, is *whither in these last times the Lord does appear by any such extraordinary signs, that are publick in the sight of the World*, and bring near such discoveries of his *Godhead* in any *special acts of Providence*, as may bear the same *evidence of miracles*. For *Answer*; it is sure, the Lord does not reveal himself this way, but on some great and extraordinary ground, who hath settled the faith of his Church absolutely on his revealed truth, yet may it be said, that no age is left without some witnesse of such a kind; if there were not a sad inadvertence, and shutting of mens eyes, when the Lord is going by them in any great acts of his power, but as to this *Proposal*

for I shall only point at some instances, that seem to have least suitable regard or notice, and to be past by with most.

1. Can there be a serious judgment and reflection on that great and amazing stroke of the Pestilence, and not see an extraordinary appearance of God herein, and of its being a judgment of that kind, in some more remarkable times wherein it is left forth, as goes above all natural causes, and all may see the immediate hand of God herein both in its rise, progress, and swift spreading as a lightning, through Cities or Countries, in its passing by some more then others where no cause can appear, so as men must see its being sent with commission from Heaven, and a supernatural causality, as visibly as if they had stood with David, and the Elders of Israel 2 Samuel 19: 17. to see the Angel that smote the People between the Heaven, and the Earth; upon which account David did choose rather to come under this stroke then the Sword or Famine, because it was in a more immediate way the hand of the Lord, and where there is a more then ordinarie near approach, and discovery of himself unto men.

2. It is of publick and uncontrollable evidence, that miraculous, and immediate witness from Heaven in the bleeding of the bodies of men on the touch of the murderer in such cases, where no ordinarie means can bear evidence. I will not speak of the warrantable use of such an appeal where

the revealed rule of our faith, and practice is not exprels herein; but as its undoubted, in the truth and reality of the same, where no humane witnessse could answer to this end, so is it surely ane immediate, *visible*, and *extraordinaire sign from Heaven* given in the sight of the World, & from him who *maketh inquisition for blood*, in a most singular way, and a sign which in every time is made evident.

3. There is also the certainty of *extraordinaire Revelation*, and of the truth of a *Prophetick Spirit imparted to some as to special events of Providence*, which is so known and of that evidence as no age of the Church hath been without instances hereof, what I mean hereby as to that more singular way of the Lords revealing himself, to some of his *Servants* by a more extraordinar application of his Word, is such as in the truth and certainty hereof can leave no room for doubtfulness; tho on the other hand, as to the way and *dismal trade of divination*, that hath got up in the World, by seeking a *Divinity* either from the *Stars above* or the *Powers of darknes below*, it may be clearly seen is one of the great designs of Satan, not only to counterfeit the way of the Lord herein, but to bring men unto a more direct homage to himself; but I mention this instance only as it is so great, and unquestionable a *demonstration of God*, and of his giving in every age some *extraordinaire seal* of this kind.

I shall

I shall but mention here one remarkable *passage* of which I am to the furthest perswaded, that may seem strange, with respect to this late *great Revolution in the State of Britain*; how it was expressly foretold under its proper circumstances many years past; and was one of the first passages of any weight that hath been still fixed in my remembrance; of a relation I had from ane ancient, and *eminent Minister of Christ* of a *Prediction* imparted to him by one of an extraordinary, and Prophetick Spirit in that time; that so great, a Scene of Providence should be acted in *Britain*, and change in the publick face of affaires by the coming over of a *Prince of Orange*, who should be the great Instrument, and Actor therein; and tho some particulars relating thereto I cannot exactly remember, yet this in the substance with such ane express designation as I have now mentioned hath from my young years had a settled impression in my memory, and as I am sure and perswaded of the truth hereof, and that the foresaid Relater had such a *Prediction* long before there was any allyance betwixt the House of *Britain* and of *Orange*; yea am sure this did exceed the reach of humane apprehension at that time, from any rise or tendency of natural causes in the order and series thereof; so is it not now mentioned after the event only, but what severall years before, I gave ane ac-

„ count and relation off to some of great quality,
 „ who still know the same, when there was not
 „ the least appearance of such a thing, tho I could
 „ lay no further weight thereon, which seemed so
 „ strange and improbable, but that the thing in it
 „ self as to the truth of such a Prediction was
 „ reall.

4 That there are *supernatural warnings* hath been given to men by some special instinct and impression not only of the approach of some great, and extraordinary tryall with respect to themselves, but of the near approach of their death, yea to some, the *precise time hereof* is a truth so known in the World, and with that undeniable evidence as might tully convince those of the most doubtful, and suspicious Spirit in things of that nature, and were it suitable here, I might give special instances which I have surely known of this kinde with respect to such, who were both pious and of great composure in their judgment, who hath had such perswasion fixed on them without the least preface from any *natural cause*, or what in an ordinary way could give a rise thereto, as it did after fall out in the event.

5. That there are also *extraordinaire signs*, and forewarnings given the World of great *Revolutions and Judgments*, ere they came on particular nations by prodigies and signs from Heaven, is of that publick evidence, and certainty as would seem not possible to question: if some methods of opposition

position to God both in his Word and Works were not peculiar to this age, and the spirit thereof this way beyond any that hath gone before, for what may be supposed and misjudged by many on such an account through ignorance and unacquaintance with natural causes, and the extent thereof, is not to be questioned, but from this, will men debate or discredit a truth that all ages must witness, and these of the most cautious and discerning amongst men; how such solemn *fore-warnings from Heaven by extraordinary signs, and prodigies*, hath been still previous to publick changes and revolutions, and to any great calamities, and judgements. Its sure these are no imaginary things, but are direct for some special end, and are sometimes in such a manner visible to the experience of the World, as hath not been in like manner known for some ages past, as that *late Comet 81*. yea occur not according to the *settled constitutions of nature*, but come both with an *surprising aspect*, and are expressly formed and directed of the Lord for some higher end then to be an emptie shew, and wonder to the World; but when the Word of truth, and threatnings thereof ceaseth to *warne* or be matter of trembling, and the *Atheistick contempt*, and *derision of the Works of God* is in this day at such a height, its like the door may be now judicially shut on any extraordinary *presages* or *warnings* this way untill one *prodigy* of some unusual judgement come, that will not be baffled by men. Whilst

Whilst I speak on such a Subject; I know there is a strange thing that comes under the *notion*, by many, of a *miracle*, tho matter of very ordinarie thoughts with others, and of a light and common regard about the same, which is in that *strange, and astonishing cure of the Struma*, or as its termed the *Kingsevil by a touch of the hand only*, without any *application of ordinary means*; that here is no *imposture* in the truth of such a thing, but that many have been undoubtedly healed by this *touch of the Kings of England*, is not questionable, which is of so *publick*, and *known evidence* in the tryall of *numerous instances*, yea that here is something *supernatural*, and unaccountable to humane understanding on *principles of reason*; when its one of the most contumacious diseases of mens body, that in the ordinarie use of means is found the most difficult to cure; but since any *extraordinaire effect* should lead men to a deep enquiry, and tryall about the *cause* hereof, and have the more weight in such a case that a *miraculous work*, where it is in truth, is *Gods own seall*, which he doth rarely give but on some great, and important ground, where his glory and the interest of his truth is highly concerned; yea that its sure, where he intends such a miraculous discovery of himself to confirm the faith of his people, he gives it with the clearest evidence of his work, and a concurrence of such circumstances, as may serve conviction on all, whose

impreß and signature it bears, to difference the same from any imposture, or its beeing a diabolick sign and work, and so this calls for a just enquiry, and tryall in the present case in these respects. 1. To know its *true rise and original*, which I find in the *English Chronicles* to be dated from the time of *Edward the Confessor*, when *Antichristian darknes* was then at his greatest height, it beeing in the 1042 Year, when he began to reign, and when that *Prediction of the Apostle Theſal. 2: 2.* of a more then ordinary power and working of *Satan*, with signs and lying wonders to promote the *Antichristian interest*, was then taking place; and was in that sence only admitt to confirm the *Romish Faith* by such a strange miracle. 2. This *Inquiry* should be necessar herein, whither this pretended miraculous power belong to the *Crown* only, or hath respect to the *Quality, and Holines* of the persons who weare the same, since if it be to the first, then tho ane *Infidel*, or *Mahumetan* were established on the Throne, if this gift follow the same it must needs be derived to them also, and have such a high Priviledge annexed thereto, as the *Throne of Israel* never had, when a *David*, and *Solomon* sat thereon tho endued with ane extraordinary *Unction*; but if it respect the *Quality and Holines* of the persons, it surely must render this no less difficult, that not only such as *King Henry the VIII.* and his Daughter *Queen Mary*

Mary, besides many others, yea *Richard the III.* should on this account have the *active faith of miracles*, and be empoured herewith from God for working of the same: besides this it is known that the *French Kings* claim the same privilege and power as peculiar to them alone, and may not on this ground *Lewis the XIV* this day be reckoned a fit instrument for such a *healing miracle*, and to bring a just repute and credit thereto. 3. But whence is it that such a *hereditary gift* should not faill, and be cutt off by the *departure of England from the Romish Church*. since the first holding hereof was upon their adherence to the same, and as a *confirmatory Seall to the Romish Profession*, or that it should now controll the end for which it was given; I know what some *Popish Writers* say hereon, that this miracle is not now performed by such who have apostatised from that faith, *virtute propria, sed virtute signi crucis*, but there needs no such *Salvo*, as to reckon its being alienate now from serving for the same use, and end it did before, nor to have another rise if it were seriously pondered. 4. But what interest in this cure hath the use of such a *rite in applying with the touch a Medal of Gold* to the Patient therewith, or what vertue can this *Amulet* impart, and so great a care taken, that they should not lose it; since it is sure this is not given out of charity to there outward want, except it be from ostentation to shew they are en-
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dued with a *gift* which the *Apostles* had not when they cured the lame man, and could make use of no such assistance of *Silver* or *Gold* herein *Act. 3.*
 5. If the application of ane *extraordinary gift* for healing diseases without the use of *natural means* be enough to warrant the same, and that such a cure is wrought without any further enquiry as to the cause and ground whereon it hath such an effect, it is then sure, the *Devil*, and these *Powers of darkness* may have a publick and easie market in the Christian Church, and exact an uncontrolled homage and subjection to them this way. the extent of whose power for curing of diseases is beyond our reach, but since such a *miraculous gift* of healing if it be of God should be tryed in the truth thereof, how it can answer to such peculiar *evidences*, and *criteria* of the same, as by the infallible *rule*, and *light of the Scripture* may be clear; it were suitable to try herein, if this be indeed given to *confirm and seall a divine testimony* or any *truth of the written Word*; if it come with that *solemn and convincing evidence* so as to serve a *deep and reverent sense of the Majesty of God* on mens spirit, by such a discovery of himself, and to promote *piety*, and more firm adherence to the truth amongst men, as the native effect that should follow a true *miracle*, and so extraordinary a seall, if it serve also to control the *Kingdom of Satan*, and strengthen the *Christian Faith* in opposition to *Antichristian*
dark-

darkneſſ, and *Idolatry*; yea if theſe who are thus empoured for ſo miraculous a cure have ſomething ſuitable on their part of qualifications, to ſuch whom God hath ever made uſe off to work *miracles*, otherwiſe it ſerves only to expoſe ſo great a *ſcall* to the Chriſtian Faith, wherein the *Majeſty of God* in ſo *auguſt*, and *ſolemne a way* is revealed, unto the higheſt contumely and reproach. 6. Though this hath been a continued practice, and that the *matter of Fact*, and notoriety of experience herein in the truth of ſuch a cure is not queſtioned, yet if it be eſſentially requiſite, that ſuch as claim to this power, ſhould do it in the *Faith of a divine Warrant*, and aſſurance that it is of God, with an immediate reliance on a ſpecial outletting of ſome extraordinary power from him herein; and of his *call* to reſt on the ſame, when it is without reſpect to any *inſtitute*, & *natural means*, yea that there ſpirit in ſuch a caſe ſhould be ſuited to ſo extraordinary a worke, I judge it ſhould then quickly ceaſe; as on the other hand that theſe who are *deſeaſed*, and apply themſelves to ſuch a *cure*, ſhould know the warrant of their faith herein, elſe it were as juſtifiable to go to *Loretta* on ſuch an account, or to ſuch who pretend by *ſpells*, and *charms*, to work extraordinary cures without any ordinary means for the ſame. This is not to detract in the leaſt from any juſt right or priviledge of *Soveraign Princes*, and I judge theſe who are now on the
Throne

Throne of Britain might lay as just a claim from *personal qualifications* thereto, as any have gone before, but in giving to *Cæsar what is due unto him*, we must not invade that *Royalty*, and *Prerogative* which belongs to *God* only, or to pretend to his *seall*, and make use of it without his express warrant. If any *Protestant Writer* have spoke their thoughts on such a head, I have as yet seen none; but some time past, I was necessarily called by a person of great worth, to impart my light herein, they being then much perplexed in spirit with respect to a near relation of theirs, in order to their using such a mean; and how small a reckoning may be made by many, yet I find it related of that *Famous Christian Mrs Honynwood*, that the first rise of these terrors of conscience which kepted her so long, was from consulting some mean as to the recovery of a childe, in a way that was out of the roade of ordinar means, and made her fear afterwards lest *Satan* might have a hand therein

But I shall now cease to speak more on this subject; and only shut up with some *Reflections* further which have been matter of serious thoughts to me.

1. Whence it is that such who are of the most trying and comprehensive spirit hath usually been under greatest weight and exercise of minde, about their establishment in the *Christian Faith* more then any others: but herein it may be ealie to see,

and discern the true *cause* thereof, 1. How it is sure, the more attainment of *light* and *knowledge* is upon the greatnesse of their *Faith*, that a higher admiration and astonishment must needs follow thereon; it was this which above all the wonders and depths of nature, did swallow up the spirit of a *Solomon*, and put him into such an *extacy*, when he once begun to fix on this *Subject*, but will God indeed dwell, with men on the earth, yea will the eternal Son of God take up his abode, and dwell in such a tabernacle as the humane nature, and become truly man which is specially there imported 2 *Chron* 6: 18. 2. It is these only who have their souls sealed with a deeper sense then others, of the *high*, and *wonderful consequence* of such a *Faith*, as to themselves, and what is their personal interest herein; on which their souls venture for eternity lyes; so as it is not strange, that they can not possibly enjoy the comfort of such a *Faith* under any doubtful suspence this way, or have their souls at rest, with that manner of *assent* wherewith most satisfie themselves in this day. 3. Yea it is these alone, who have another *Idea of Religion*, and the *wonders of the Christian Faith* settled on their spirit, then the residue of men, who thus see what great things are before them, and shortly to come to pass, and how such a *Faith* is not easily attained; but that a continued weight, and exercise herein on their spirits becomes unavoidable. And tho

tho Sir to one of such a spirit, as I know you are off. there needs little be said of this kind, yet when I look on the face of this *Generation*, even of the more serious part of men herein, it would appear that most were rather in a *sleep and dream*, then *awake*; else were it conceivable, how they could find it easie to bear, and stand under the weight of such discoveries, without almost fainting under the greatness hereof, if they be indeed assured of such things as these. 1. That within a little time, their eyes are to be for ever shut on this earth. and in one moment opened on that *entry* which is into another *World*, and on that hid, and marvelous *passage*, which lyes betwixt the *earth*, and the *higher Paradise above*, which is in the *third Heavens*, and will then know what it is to see with clear, and preceptible evidence ther *conduct*, and *convoyance* by the *blessed Angels*, and the manner of their *ascent* through these *Ethereal Regions*, in every step of the same, their begun acquaintance, and society with these *glorious spirits*; which shall be without fear, and consternation, as when they were in the *body*, and at last that unconceivable *reception* by the *blessed Trinity*; now is it possible, that men here on the earth can with assurance entertain their souls with such great things as before them, and near, and yet in an ordinarie way converse with the same. 2. Is it a light or small thing to live in the Faith of such a *Triumph*, as is reserved to each of the

Saints in the issue of their warefare, when the *God of Peace shall tread Satan under their feet*, and shall enter them into the *overcomers joy*, with that publick testimonie, *well done good, and faithful servant &c.* before the whole Church of the redeemed there, and then to be called to a peculiar assignment of their *room*, and *station* in that *blessed state* answerable to their services and attainments of grace here, when they shall see the *end of the Lord* in his whole conduct and methods of providence about them within time, which once seemed incomprehensible to their thoughts.

3. Yea what is it to be in the serious exercise of such a *Faith*, that in a short time there shall be a *final translation of the whole Church militant from this earth to these higher Regions of glory*, where no more distance of place, and but one Church and Society for ever, where our *blessed Redeemer shall then rejoyce in his whole purchase*, whom he had bought at so dear a price, and presented without spot, or blemish unto the Father; and where the whole *elect* from *Abell*, the first of humane race, that entred Heaven, and the first member of the Church triumphant there, to the last, who was called by the Gospel, shall meet once and for ever together. 4. And are there such now on the earth, who shall ere long see themselves in the same *state and classe* with the *elect Angels*, who could not in this *state of mortality* bear the sight, or apparition of one of these *glorious spirits*;

rits; yea shall enjoy them in the same intimacy of fellowship as these that were redeemed from amongst men; and tho with humble sobriety, I would offer any thoughts on so high a mystery, yet seems it safely warranted to judge, that as each of these *blessed spirits*, is a *distinct person* from other, endued with a most excellent life, and understanding, tho in some different degree of *exaltation*, as to their *office and services*, so are they ane undoubted part of the *Church*, over which *Christ is the supreme Head*; wherein at that *last and great Jubilee*, even in something of a glorious corporeal frame, there may be a likeness, and conformity to him, *in whom the fulnesse of the Godhead dwells bodily*, and for a more near oneness, and Communion with the Saints made perfect. who shall then not only be *like*, but *equal to the Angels*, which otherwise could not be well understood, since it is sure their *bodies*, though then spiritual and glorious, will be the same in *substance* that they were here, and will not be only *spirits*. 5. And what a wonder of our *Faith* should it be that ere long this also shall be the object of mens sense, *the conflagration of this whole earth*; that earth, on which most of the generations of men had settled their *Heaven*, to see it all *burnt up* before them, and herein the final issue of their hopes, and projects upon the same, whilst nothing to such will then further remain, but to enter themselves into everlasting

flames. 6. Is it a small thing to enjoy such a *Faith* here on the earth, as that *reunion*, which they shall then have with so endeared a part of themselves, their *body*, and what a *meeting* that must be after so dark a parting, and separation; these very *bodies* which had been partners with them, both in their work and services, and in all their sufferings within time; which they can now embrace never to part with, to partake of the same eternal enjoiments, and which will be then no lett to their *ascent* to *meet the Lord in the air*.

7. Can it possibly be a subject of ordinarie thoughts or assent, that men now on the earth, shall shortly see *the glory and state of the last Judgment*, and of their *blessed Head on that Throne of His Majesty*, yea thus see at once, the whole generations of men, and these who sometime were the greatest *Monarchs* here, presented then to be judged; and to see such a *solemn particular*, and *distinct* judgment past on each according to their deeds, and work within time; and in that blessed *order* wherein the whole *Saints*, and each personally of these, having a distinct part herein, shall be *first acquitt*, *approven*, and *accepted* in the face of this great *Assembly*, with the publick testimony of the *Judge*, according to the *measure of their service and tryalls for his sake*, whilst they were in the *World*; and *next* in the *condemnatory part of that Judgment* to see the whole *fallen Angels*, who *first sinned* have the
first

first *final sentence* *past on them*; as it was thus intimate after the *fall of man*, & the whole successive race of *mankind*, each in their *order*, with that full evidence, of the *Holy Righteousness of the Judge herein*, as shall irresistably constrain their conscience to bear witness thereto. 8. Yea what a concern of the *Christian Faith* lyes here, of that *eternal separation* and *parting*, which will then follow betwixt the elect, and reprobate World, with that dreadful *dimission to these infernal Regions*, and with this sight to see *sin*, which made its first entry in *Heaven amongst the Angels*, and hath since so much *overspread the earth*, now for ever shutt up in *hell*, both *sin*, and *sinner together*, never more to look out at the *gate of these prisons*.

But II. There is another thing with respect to this *Subject*, which hath been to me oft matter of *serious thoughts*, whence is it that in so knowing an age as this, we see how such as are greatest pretenders to *reason*, and to a *higher flight* then others this way are more visibly then any else of an *Atheistick Spirit*, and to be a length herein beyond any else on that *design*, how to *weaken both their own assent*, and *others to the Christian Faith*, and to render the same so far as possibly they can, to be *problematick and doubtful*; but it is lure here is nothing to *stumble*, but what may rather be *strengthening* to any of a serious spirit, and needs be no strange thing, when such are as tender as possible, to marr their enjoiments of this present

F 4

life,

life, who hath no more; or to let their thoughts come near to what must needs *torment* them *before the time*: whilst their *reason* serves them for such an *use*, and constrains their conscience herein, that they must either be *Christians in earnest*, or *none at all*, yea that under such bright discoveries of the truth of the Gospel, they must see it is not *compatible with reason*, how there should be a *mids* betwixt a truly *serious Christian*, who *beleeves*, *what he does professe*; and a *resolved Atheist* whose work lyes to have the dread of such
 ,, a *Faith* wholly extinguished. I knew a most
 ,, remarkable *Atheist* indued with special natural
 ,, accomplishments, who on the same account
 ,, said to a person of quality, if I did truly *beleeve*
 ,, *what you profess to do*, they are matters of so
 ,, great concern, that I do profess I could think
 ,, upon nothing else or be *taken up* thus, as the
 ,, most of *Christians* are, with the things of this
 ,, *World*; so as I cannot possibly credit you in
 ,, the *Faith* of your own Profession. And herein
 can any exercise reason, and not see the *Faith of Christianity*, is another thing, then most this day did ever conceive it to be, and a much higher attainment, then a *Christians particular interest* herein, for where the *first* is assuredly attained, it may seem not possible, but the *other* must follow, that mens greatest business of the earth, should be to have a *sure evidence for Heaven*; and to be ripening for so great a change. I have
 known

known some whose tryalls, and conflicts in their warfare hath been extraordinary, and strange, who hath professed their highest releaf still lay herein, from the *Faith of divine truth* more then as to any *particular promise made applicable to such a case*, and would have sought no more to carry their spirits above the *present temptations* that occurred though they were not ordinary, or to be at rest as to all *temporal events*, but a more full strenthning in the *Christian Faith*, and that their *Redeemer did live*, since then they were in *sure terms*, as to their *security* for whatever he hath promised.

III. But I must add yet one thing further which seems indeed a *prodigy*, proper to such an *age* as this, that its become so hard a work to bring men living in the *day light of the Ghospel to a serious beleevving the truth*, and existence of *infernal spirits*, and of their commerce, and traffick with this visible World; or to bring such who seem greatest pretenders to reason, to the *Faith of Devils*, lest they should thus be unavoidably brought to that *Faith of the Devils*, which is to beleeve, and tremble, which surely is an unconceivable and extream horror that these *Apostate Spirits* have herein, whilst their assent to the *glorious beeing of God*, to his attributes, yea to the *truth*, and *History of the Ghospel*, is by such an inevitable constraint, that as there is no possible access for them to be *Atheists*, so is their *dread*, and

torment heightned beeing such *knowing intellectual*
essences, as that power, and subtilty of *delusion*,
 whereby they deal with mankind will not work
 on themselves. This I must judge, to be the last
 effort of the horrid wickedness of this present age,
 to strenthen such a way, and since such a party
 can have no help or support from *faith*, and *rea-*
son herein, and yet find the assured truth, and
 beeing of *Divels*, and of their communion, and
 warefare with men, does marr any possible de-
 fence or design for *Atheism*, and a taking off the
 terror of ane *infernal state*, off their soul, they
 must therefore move to another airth, which is
 to *beleeve nothing but what they see and feell*, and
 comes under a sensible demonstration to warrant
 the same: for this is to make sure work at once
 against the whole *Christian Faith*, and shut the
 door on any way of conviction thence; thus
 they keep a distance with the beeing of their own
souls, as if it were some dark, and abstract no-
 tion, because it comes not under their *sence*; they
 can live at quiet, and be secure from the fear of a
Hell, and *infernal world*, or exclusion out of
Heaven untill they once meet with such an *argu-*
ment, as to make them both *see*, and *feell* the
 truth hereof; but oh they seeme not to apprehend
 how sore the application of this *argument* will be,
 when they at last find its in vain to reject the *con-*
clusion, where the *premises* are sure. There is
 one of late, who is come forth in the day light of
 Chri-

Christianity, in a book lately published, to undeceive the World upon so great a delusion, as to these invisible powers of darknesse, and tho he seems to find it difficult how to annihilate, and make void wholly their existence, yet doth offer with a strange confidence to secure men from any fear of the molestations of such Spirits, and that all inward temptations or assaults of Satan, and his operating upon the souls of men, is but a deplorable fascination, and bewitchment, that the Christian Church hath been so long under. It might be judged, there were little need for such a worke to take this generation we are now in off all watch, and guard against these destroying adversaries, and to render them more secure herein, then they seem already to be; and that this confidence, must have some strange rise, to go forth not only in the most direct opposition to Sacred Truth, but to the universal Sence, and reason of mankind, except he hopes to find a numerous party, who hath given up with both, and will easily grasp at such a bait tho they should see the hook that will at last destroy them. But doe these mighty hunters, and destroyers of mankind the Devils, come so little speed in their work this day, that they must have a Protestant Minister of the Church come forth before the Sun to offer his assistance to help them forward herein, or if he deny such an intent, what security will he offer to secure men, from a hazard that's more dreadful then the killing

ling of *their body*, and is of an eternal concern; is he empowred with authority from these *infernal Regions*, I confels on these grounds he may have advantage to give such an assurance. 1. That the *strong man whilst he keeps the house*, will be very tender to trouble their peace over whom he swayes, with an uncontrolled Dominion, and that he will not affright, nor awake men out of such a pleasant dream, who hath set their heart wholly on the world, & whose portion is in this life, untill they be awaked for ever out of the same. 2. He may give full assurance also that the *Prince of this World* is at no war, nor needs be with such as are joined in with his interest, and at the same work to promote the *Kingdom of darknes*, and seeks not to have them tormented before the time. 3. But there is this ground, I must judge he specially goes on; that he will be easily credited on such a *Subject* as this, and knowes how small a *patrociny*, will serve to promote a design for *Atheism*, and could fall upon nothing, which would be more grateful to a great part now who bear the name of *Protestants*, but whilst he calls them to lay aside their *armour*, such as Christians are expressly called to put on *Ephes. 5: 11*. will he secure them when it comes to the *last battle*, and *conflict*, from their being seized by such *infernal Spirits* in their entry into another *World*, whom they did once deride, and that the *truce* which was with them on the earth, will not break up

up then: if he had restricted this *new discovery* to the world, of ane absolute security from the *Power of Satan*, and his *molestations*, to belong only to the *Place*, and *City he lives in*, it might have seemed to be on a politick interest, to render it, as a place of such eminent trade, to be the only safe, and most desirable part of the earth; but he hath extended it to be universal to all other places, and to be a *Catholick good*, and *priviledge*. There needs no question, but that such a *person himself* must be in a deep quiet, and under no touch of these *assaults* and *temptations* others are exposed to; tho one thing he may fear in the managing of so strange a design, and in such a manner, that these *knowing* and *active spirits*, for whom he *acts*, may not reckon their service much advanced, when there is as *little of the subtilty of the Serpent herein, as of the innocence of the dove*. It is true there is an *invisible guard*, and *hedge* about each one of the Saints over which *Satan* cannot pass, but by the *measures of divine permission*; nor is it expressible how much *Christians of the choicest spirits* are *bettered*, and *improven in their graces* by the *worst of spirits*, and in their continued warefare with them; and its sure they are reserved in *chains of darkness to the Judgment of the great day*, but how far their *chain* is oft let forth, and enlarged in judgment to the world, may be too evident every where in the sad effects thereof, and it now
appears,

appears, that their chain hath not been more remarkably lengthned out these many ages past, then in this day. I wish the *Writer of such a Book* might seriously repent, and so far retract what he hath published, as might thus turn such a poison unto ane antidote against it self, for I judge he durst not put such Divinity in his Testament, that he hath written in this Book.

P O S T S C R I P T.

S I R,

IT may seem strange, not only the lengthning of this *Discourse* so far, but in insisting most specially upon that *Head of the internal Work, and Demonstrations of the Spirit of God on mens soul*; but as I may with humble confidence say this was under the sense of some peculiar engagements to such a Subject; so I shall make this further *Apology* for the same. 1. That since ever I accounted the *Profession of Christ a serious business*, I have judged it not conceivable how *Christians* should have ane assent to the truth of the *Gospel* or be at rest herein, untill it once be brought up to a full, and quieting assurance on that security, to which they must concredite themselves for ever, and thus know the strength, and sureness of the foundation of their Faith by its own evidence; that tho it be not yet full, whilst we are here in the way of enjoyment

joyment, yet is it undoubtedly full in the truth,
 and certainty of evidence; I have judged it also
 an addition to the greatest joy which I could have
 within time, whatever might be a further strength-
 ning to such a Faith, and hope we are called to by
 the Gospel of Christ, so as not to lose any frag-
 ment of this kind, which might tend to a more
 full establishment, and does reckon this the cre-
 dit, and glory of our Religion, that in no other
 way it doth require acceptance of men, but with
 a full assurance of understanding, and the furthest
 conviction of evidence; as being designed no
 less to found a rational certainty in the judgment,
 then to determine the will or consent for embracing
 the same; yea on this account it hath been oft
 matter of astonishment, how in the teaching, and
 ministerial work, which God hath appointed for
 his Church, the primary truths of Religion should
 not be more held forth to men with that clearness
 of evidence and demonstration, as such great, and
 marvelous things require, and the temper of this
 age calls for; or how the great things of God, that
 are of the highest consequence, and reality, can
 have any possible reception from men by an im-
 plicite or ordinarie assent; or whence it is, that with
 most it seemes their work seems wholly sett on
 the noetick, when so little on the dianoetick part of
 Divinity: but on the other hand I must also wit-
 ness, that if ever I knew what it was to attain an
 inward assurance of the truth, and revelation of
 Christ,

Christ, and to be at rest herein; that the *eternal Son of God was revealed from Heaven in our nature to save lost man*, and that there is a *state of grace here, and of glory hereafter*; I have found that no *light, or conviction of judgment*, tho with such evidence as could leave no room for doubtfulness in the same, can effectually work without the *internal evidence, and demonstration of the Spirit of God*, and a supernatural power both to beget, and strengthen such a Faith in the soul; yea that without this, the furthest of *objective evidence* to cause irresistably a clear and rational assurance of divine truth, tho it were followed with a *dispensation of miracles*, will not quiet the Spirit of such, who under some deep exercise may be haunted with *hid, and dreadful temptations to infidelity*, until they know the truth of a power, and evidence, as goes above any *moral influence*. It is true this is not expressible to others, and they must *come and see*, who would know in what manner the Spirit of God bears evidence to his own truth, and what *strong impression his work hath on the internal Senses of a Christian*, yea what *piercing intelligences* are betwixt such, who surely know, and are partakers of a *divine life*, and their *blesed Head* in this state of mortality, but if this were not known and sure, we might say an established Christian whose work is to *follow the Lord fully*, and adventure with assurance upon him, is such as might be
sought

sought for here in the earth, but would not be found. 2. If I be perswaded of the *truth*, and *Excellency of Religion*, I must see this to be of as undeniable evidence, that it hath no true or solid interest in the Earth, but in the way of *tryal* and *experience* in it's power and efficacy on mens soull; and makes no reall ground or conquest, by an external profession, or can serve to *eternal ends*, until once that radical principle of *the life of God in the soull* be understood; that choile company who are now going through time to the *Church triumphant* upon fresh and continued supplies of divine assistance, are these alone in whom the *Christian Faith* is kept alive this day on the earth, and it is one of the things I have thought most astonishing in the publick State of Religion, that in an age, when reason is so much pretended, men can design a *tryall* of the enjoyment of a *Heaven* for ever in another World, and yet hath not the same design on a personal tryall of the enjoyments of grace here, to know converse with God in the spirit, and the certainty of that trade and commerce, which is betwixt Heaven and Earth whilst we are yet on it, that are things so highly remote from all humane sense. 3. It hath prest me to insist more on this *subject*, that this *way* is so visibly gathering strength, and seems to have the greatest prevalence now in the *Reformed Churches*, how to divide the *moral part* of our Religion in the duties and services

thereof, from its *internal and vital part*, so as this mortal contagion hath got in on the light and principles of this Generation, that if there were not an absolute assurance by the promise of God, we might fear truth and piety should quickly perish from the earth. Oh what a strange & prodigious opposition is this! against the whole *internal work & vitals* of that pure and excellent Religion; wherein both the comfort and glory of humane state lyes, & how is't conceivable men should be here capable of converse with God in the spirit, if there were not a conformity to him in the same kind by a participation of the *divine nature*; yea if there were not so rare a being on the earth as the *new man, which is born of God*, and his immediate workmanship, which hath its peculiar growth & *vital acts* proper thereto, and in that sence as it's contradistinguished from the *old man cannot possibly sin it self*, tho it be formed in the heart of a sinner, and hath it's being therein, no more then the *life of God*, which is a partaking of the divine nature, can put forth any act of sin, but hath a continued conflict therewith; and thus tends to give the clear sence of that Scripture 1 *John* 5: 18. *we know that whatever is born of God sinneth not, & Rom* 7: 20. *It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me, nam unumquodque operatur secundum suam formam*; for if this stood not sure, the whole frame of experimental Religion, were an unaccountable riddle.

A SECOND LETTER

*Wherein some Inquiry upon the times,
and the work of Providence about
the Church; but more specially with
respect to the publick State of Bri-
tain and Ireland in this last age, is
seriously designed.*

SIR,



may truly say, it did raise a special va-
lue and esteem on my spirit, to meet
with one in such a day, who hath so
great a weight and impression of the
publick State of the Church, and a sense of the
present times, so far above the ordinarie thoughts
of men; when they seem so rare who look further
then present things, either to what is past in these
extraordinar times have gone over this Genera-
tion, or who hath another Judgment and Prog-
nostication of what may be near, & yet before us,
then from visible and natural causes. But though
I must decline an answer to what you are pleased
more particularly to propose, under a just sence
of my unsuitness herein, yet so far as I have at-
tained in the matter of light upon a more general
account with respect to the *Work of God in these*

great changes past, I am free to impart my self, and to offer humbly some few thoughts on such a *Subject*, which hath had most special evidence and weight on my spirit in the present day.

I. I doubt not you make the same Judgment, and reckoning of this with more advantage then I can reach, that one of the most choise and weighty exercises of a Christian, whilst he is within time, lyes in a *deep and serious observation of the times* he is fall'n in, not only with respect to the administration of Providence in humane affairs, but what does more eminently relate to the *Churches of Christ*, and where their lott is cast; since this is an essential part of Religion, as it's also one of the most choise of humane excellencies, to discern and *observe wisely* the ways of the Lord. But I can only shew you some of these things in a short touch, which I have found most engaging to such an Inquiry in this day. 1. That as each distinct *age* hath a proper *Talent* given thereto, under trust for observation of such events of Providence, wherein the name of God is more near unto men in any singular way, then in the ordinarie course of his actings, so hath the great *Author of time* choised to put a *higher Glory upon one age*, and *period of time*, then another, wherein it might be said that the measure of one is *five Talents*, as to more solemn appearances of the Majesty of God in his Providential Actings, when the measure of other times hath been this way

way but as *two Talents*. Such a differencing marke had that *age of the Churches coming out of Egypt*, beyond all which had gone before; yet was this comparatively little with respect to that glory, which was reserved to the *fulnes of time*, when our blest Redeemer did appear to the World. And it's clear how in these later times, that *age* which had it's first entry from the Year 1517. had a higher splendor put thereon, then had been known for a *thousand Years* preceeding the same; but when I have thought on the way and conduct of Providence, and marvelous discoveries of God herein to this Generation, I could not but see something in a most singular way of his appearance before the World to the same, as seems but yet little understood, tho this may be seen, that we have surely lived in an *age of wonders*.

2. I have lookt on such an exercise, to *discern, and understand aright the times we are in*, as one of the most singular means for strengthening a *Christians Faith* on the certainty of sacred truth; when with these more immediate discoveries of God in the way and administration of grace by his spirit on mens soull, which is wholly hid from the World, they can see in what manner his truth does visibly take place, and is attested by an *external seall* in the glory of his work before men, and I am perswaded none thus did ever pursue a more near acquaintance with God, but hath had some peculiar strengthening remarks of his way,

that have been hid from others, tho of a serious spirit otherwise. 3. It is such who have some greater weight of this choise study, and their spirits more fully join'd in therewith then others, who may attain more clear discoveries of light, for directing them to the *duties* and *work of such a time*; and on this account I fear that there is much yet this day in the dark to us, and not understood, what hath been the *Voice of the Lord* for answering the great ends of his Providence, tho it hath been clear and distinct, where mens spirits were laid open to entertain the same. I confess it is not strange as to the greatest part of men this day, tho they keep at the furthest distance from what might bring near an affecting sense of a Godhead to their soull in the ways of Providence, who are resolute not to see, or be perswaded of what doeth torment them hereby, whose great study is to *live without God in the World*, and seem emulous of thele who can be most ingenious and expert, to confirm their hearts against all that is sacred. 4. But I am sure, it is something much higher then any interest of men or of Nations, or the greatest changes in the posture of humane affairs, which should bear the greatest weight in this exercise to understand the times we are in, and for a suitable obervation thereof, if men could once reckon that their great business in the earth lyes with God, and in keeping sight of him in the outgoings of his Providence,

dence, since the *hidden wisdom of God in a Mystery* is to be seen and sought out in his *Works*, as well as in his *Word*; it's true *publick Revolutions*, and the fall and letting up of great men are things highly observable and momentous, but they are neither seen or understood, when they make not way for some greater sight of the *Majesty of God*, and the signal *retaliations of Judgement* herein, & what peculiar aspects such strange *Revolutions of Providence* hath on the *present Generation*.

II. Though it might seem unsuitable to offer any special *Remarks and Observations* upon this *late time*, to one of so discerning a spirit, of things of that nature; yet knowing how a mutual communication of light, about the *Work of God*, and his *actings* in our day, is so incumbent a duty, I shall point at a few things, wherein I have desired to admire and observe the way of *Providence* in this *remarkable age*, but in the first place more generally touch such a *Head*, ere I speak in some particular way thereto.

1. When we see the *series of these times*, and different measures of tryall and service assigned thereto, since that blessed rise, and recovery of the Church from Antichristian darkness, there might be seen also a *growing increase of light*, which in this *age* hath had such an advance, as it could not but be expected, that the Lord was to take some higher proofs of the *improvements* thereof

from this Generation then of these past, after such great things he had done for a full settlement of the *Reformed Churches*; when he had opened the *graves* of his people, and sent forth his *Prisoners by the blood of the Covenant*, & the truth had made way for its self over *mountains*, which once seem'd insuperable; yea when this also is an *age*, where in a great concurrence of the *Prayers of the Saints* in times before, was to meet for the Churches interest; so that, unanswerableness to the expectation of God herein, and to frustrate such eminent methods of grace, might expect some unusual work of Judgment to follow thereon, and the Lords coming at last to a judicial proces and procedure.

2. We see how these extraordinary occurrences of this *time past*, hath most remarkably had a joint respect both to *Sacred, and Civil Interests*, & *quoad Fata Ecclesie, & Imperii humani*, so as in that sense it might be said there hath been a *shaking both of Heaven and Earth*, as to the Churches visible State; yea such hath these *great changes* from the right hand of the most high been within the measure of *one age*, as men could not possibly see with the eye of reason, without amazement, tho it brings therewith one of the most dismal remarks of the present time, if mens spirits be not seiled with a deep and awful sense of the tremendous Majesty of God herein, and know there is no stability of humane state this day in the earth

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but from him alone, who can bring judgement on the greatest *Nations*, or *Persons*; above the common course of nature, and influence of second causes: but oh what intertainment should a dispensation of *Miracles* find from the spirits of men now, when the *Revelation of Christ*, and *Redemption by his Blood* from *Eternal Wrath*, hath no greater effects on this *Generation*, and so few awak'd with the *Glory* of such a light.

3. When I have considered this *age*, as that which might have been judged a time of great expectation for a further advance of the *Kingdom of Christ* in the *World*, which does specially make a time more remarkable, yet how little access hath been herein to see the *Work of God* in any new planting of *Churches*, or inbringing of *Nations* to the Profession of the *Gospel*, as hath been formerly, but instead of new *Conquest*, rather a losing ground, and is a difficult part become to maintain a *defensive work* in behalf of the truth, and which may be a serious remark that in this *age*, one tribe hath as it were been cut off from the Reformed Churches; I mean as to that dismal State of *Bohem*, where some time before had been so eminent and flourishing a plantation; it is true there hath been a solemn tide of the effusion of the *Spirit of God*, allotted to some of the Churches in this last *age*, that should be still matter of sweet remembrance, but it's sure this day we see the *ebb* as low in these places, in the life and power of

Religion, and no visible reviving almost any where can be heard of the *Churches of Christ*; which yet hath been to me so far a hopeful *sign* of a near *incalling of the Jews*, since it will then find the *Gentile Church* in so judicial a Period of time, that it shall be as *life from the dead*.

4. Yet it is sure on the other hand there hath been most signal honor and glory put on this *age*, and with a special respect to *Britain and Ireland*, in as great a harvest of serious and solid Christians by the Power of the Gospel, then hath been in any time or place of the Earth, since the first *three Centuries*; tho not under that seal of Martyrdom as was after the Reformation, yet such who shined in the truth and power of true Sanctity, and have left a fragrant Savour and remembrance to this day, when most of that blessed stock is now gone, and their room rarely filled up any where.

5. Yea this further may be matter of sweet *Reflection*, how many such hath been in this *age*, in whom that ancient greatness of spirit with Heroick motions in appearing for God, and his truth might be seen; for tho they attained not to the *measure of the first three*, of our first and blessed Reformers, yet may it be said, within the limits of this *age*, there hath gone off the stage innumerable instances of such eminency of induements, and with that measure of power, and of a sound mind, as might be compared with any of the

the *Antients* since the *Apostolick times*; and this is a remark that never faills of Christs imparting himself in these measures of his spirit to a *Church* in such a time, according to the great ends he is to accomplish there.

6. Though *great changes upon a Nation or Church*, does not want previous and remarkable warnings from the Lord, we have seen with what a marvelous *Surprisal* these have occurred to this Generation, that were most remote from all humane thoughts, and once not conceivable upon the highest principles of reason, how ever they should have taken place. It is becoming the Majesty of God, to have his *Arcana Imperii*, in such peculiar and reserved cases, as the most skilled in the ways and depths of Providence are called to be still with a silent admiration, when he thus does arise, as in these times past, to do great things which was not looked for.

7. But how strange and marvelous hath the *surprisalls* been of Providence in our day also in the way of tenderness, and mercy, as well as of Judgment, which should be a most strengthening remark, if this had been more suitably improven; what unexpected and seasonable interpositions have been of a divine immediate power, in *extreme exigences*, both of the *Church*, and *particular Christians*, in these great changes past; and as *Oppressors* have grown up to a height of Violence, how observably have *Carpenters* been prepared,

pared, whence humane reason could not have fore seen to cut the *horns* of such.

8. When we can not but see with what a signal evidence and commission, the spotless Judgment of God hath gone forth in these late times, to all ranks and stations of men, especially in the *Isle of Britain*, there might be also some peculiar remarke of it's design against these, who were of the *highest State*, so as no time past did ever tend more to *seall instruction* on the spirits of great men then of late, to have the fear and dread of God on them, when *Princes might have been seen walking on foot, and Servants riding on horseback*; yea that there is a time of *Gods making inquisition for blood*, of such who seemed most secure from humane Power, and how this alone comes from a divine hand, when men are *poisoned in their own cup*, and lays a snare to themselves by which they are caught; it is true a clear application of *Providence* past, to the *present times*, is not easily attained, but I doubt not of a more full light and discovery for this end, as will silence all oppositions, that have been to the intent and Counsell of the Lord in these things which have occurred.

9. It hath been reserved to our day, to see the *Issue*, and *great Decisions*, which have been in these strange *Scenes* of Providence, in this age past, and to have them now in our sight in the whole successive course thereof, and surely this might be a great and affecting sight to such who

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are ready to think that God hath forsaken the earth, and walketh only in the circuit of Heaven, when [they cannot but see what amazing events hath been of late brought forth by an invisable and unpreventable conduct of Providence; and to see also in this late Revolution of the publick State of *Britain*, how by one great surprisal, the whole *Popish Measures* there which had been of so long and painful a contrivance, was as in a moment broke and made void, when nothing less expected,

10. It is unquestionable, that the Lord does usually act by *second causes*, but there are steps alto of his way wherein he alone appears, and will have them seen to be wholly his work, & this now hath eminently appeared in the great transactions of these *late times*, how beyond any humane power or might, it was a *Standard by the Spirit of God lifted up*, that did visibly make way for the work he was then accomplishing, and did serve such terror on his Adversaries; yea how these who were acted forth to be instrumental thus on the service of their day, were directed for that great end to the *quieting of his Spirit* in such a piece of his Work.

11. And herewith what thoughts of heart may it cause now in the present state and juncture of things, to see such a *Conjunction* in this *Western Part of Europe*, to serve the great ends of Providence, that if it had been told our Fathers by
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any, they would have been as such who mock, that in the next age, the *House of Austria*, of *Spain*, *Lorrain* and *Savoy*, should have a joint interest with the greatest *Princes of the Reformed Religion*, and take the Sword with one consent against such a Party, whose Sword hath been bathed, and yet still is reaking in the blood of the Protestants, yea how this great instrument of Judgment, and *Patron of the Romish Interest* should most actively make way to defeat his own Projects and Counsel, by an irresistible conduct of Providence.

This is a great and unusual *Conjunction* in humane affairs, such as the Policy of the *Western Part of Christendom* is hereby cast in a new mould, wherein we are called to adore God, and his Dominion over all *Second Causes*; tho it be a *Depth of Providence*, which is yet not opened up; only herewith some *Reflections* on the same I cannot wholly pass. 1. What may be too justly feared of an inordinate respect to men, and concurrence of visible means, above what it can bear, when nothing is more effectual to cause the greatest humane succor miscarry, and sink under this weight, the relyances thereon, as if they could stand by them self, without keeping in with God alone, with that God, who is of infinite Power both to hurt & help, whose presence is ever the highest Security of a *Nation*, tho the whole World were against them. 2. But this also looks with confidence & hope, that the

the Lord is near to give some extraordinary demonstration of himself by *Providences*, as this Generation shall not get their eyes shut at, yea that this strange piece of his work, is a prelude and entry on a revolution of the publick State of the World, that shall be of a higher extent, then may be apprehended by most, and it's sure when he does begin, he will also make an end. 3. I have lookt on this remarkable *silence*, and *su-
ppence* as to any publick Decision of Providence, *this Year past*, when things seemed to be in the highest *arise* of a *Crisis*, that hereby the Lord would yet give men time to consider his Work, and take to heart his Voice by such a further *warning*; and have still observed from the records of times past, as to his Procedure, that when he was to bring forth some great piece of his Work before the World, there hath been as it were an interval of silence for a time, & like some *Cessation* of Providence, which hath preceeded the same, and made the time of his *Working*, when it was left mens *Expectation*; yea the longer a stroak hath been when it came, the longer hath a tender forbearance gone before, even when the *hand of Justice* hath been lift up; the *wheels some-
times stand still*, and the publick state of affairs is in a strange manner becalm'd when the Lord is in some eminent manner to arise according to that *Isay 42: 14. I have long time bolden my peace, I have been still, I have refrained my self, now will
I cry*

I cry as a travelling Woman &c. 41 Yea it may be a special remark, that when the Lord hath so significantly appeared to make this *great revolution in Britain* effectually, and to clear the sky and coast there from visible opposition, with such *rare preventing Providences* for that end, yet is so little ground gained by the unite strength of this *Confederacy*, but it was in the one that the Lord did act in an *extraordinary way of Providence*, in the other things doe run more in the ordinarie channel of visible means. It looks as a *sign of great Wrath*, that such an *Instrument of Judgment* hath had his *chain* so far let forth in this day, who might be called not only *Hostis Ecclesiae*, sed *humani Generis*, by these cruelties more then inhumane exerceed in the *Palatinate*; and other Parts of *Germany*, but it's fitt the World should know of what spirit and way the great *Persecutor of the Protestants in this age* is; yea for the Nations about to see there is no possible *Moral Security* for their *Civil Interests* from one whom no establishments of *Laws*, nor that *Law of Gratitude* towards such whose Fathers had brought the *House of Bourbon* to the Throne could bind: but as there is an appointing and establishing men for judgment, whose hand is made strong untill that work be perfited, so is the Sin of Britain, and other Reformed Churches, the greatest strength of this Adversary.

12. Have we not also been called to see
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such *vicissitudes of Providence*; that these for whom God had sometimes most signally appeared in raising them to the highest greatness and power, as all might clearly discern it was his hand alone, that did the same; how in a way no less wonderful he hath made known his power in breaking and bringing them low, whilst they did not know, and regard God in the day of their greatness, but thought to stand by themselves, and gave such a requital to him, as to betake themselves to another strength, then that which raised them, and try a new Scene of opposition to his truth, and interest; yea thus forgot the tempest they were once in, and these engagements, which were then on their soul, when they had once got to the *Haven*: It is sure this hath been writ forth, as in Capital Letters once and again, that men who run might read the same, and know how great and terrible a party God is, when he is not for a Church or People, but against them; and how easie it is for him by an occurrent of Providence, least feared or thought off, to give a check to the greatest deeps of humane Policy and Wit; and let such know, when they judge themselves secure from any hazard on the earth, there can be no standing, when their counsels and confidence is derided from Heaven.

13. It hath been in some singulare manner also, that in this age we have been called to see *sin and judgment meet other with* such astonishing

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circumstances, and so visible a resemblance and proportion betwixt the same, as the stroke herein pointing as with a finger at the cause, was unavoidable for a natural conscience to discern, and see a just and Holy God, thus made known, and visible in such publick and tremendous instances of his Judgment, as beyond the rate of former times have been set up, as beacons in our sight. I must join herewith, this sad remark, which hath had a peculiar respect to these times, that as it's sure nothing, but Religion in the truth thereof can effectually take off men from sin, so hath nothing, so much as Religion been oft made use off as the grand Engine to secure them therein; and what was spoke by one of the Ancients, hath been more applicable to our day, then almost any past, that never was ane age more fertile of Religions under a different profession hereof, and never more barren of Religion in the power, and efficacy of the same on mens soul.

14. It hath been in this age that such a call often and aloud hath sounded in our ears to come and see, how the greatest Powers and Nations of the earth are but as a little dust in the balance for the Sovereigne God to blow off at his pleasure, and that he hath reserved to himself a dominion, and preeminence over the Kingdoms of the Children of men, to change the greatest Monarchies. Oh what a strange reflex work might this be to have our spirits, but going back on these
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great and marvelous shakings, and utter razing hath been of publick settlements that seemd most firmly laid, the bowing down and fall of the greatest of men, and raising up such, who had been low, when the great God once begun to contend with the Oaks and Cedars, and herewith to see the extent of his power over mens spirits and inclinations, as well as their actions, so as to determine their concurrence, with their hand for his ends; contrare to the native byass, and sway of their hearts; that men might know him who is the God of the spirits of all flesh can by one and the same Providence accomplish various designs at once, and bring forth such contrare effects, as no humane wisdom could ever have supposed or foreseen, yea how these marvelous events might be clearly seen, was in their day no rare and strange contingencies to astonish men, but such as did bear a most evident signature and impress of the Majesty of God, and of his name and truth shewed forth thereon.

15. I shall but add this more upon so boundless a Subject; that we have been specially called in this age to see some unusual variation in the spotless ways and methods of Providence about his Church, and in the cours of humane affairs from what hath been the manner of his working formerly, so as men could not discern his way out by any footsteps or precedent of Providence in times past, but that something hath been reserved peculiarly to our

day, of the Lord rising up as in mount Peradsim, and his being wroth as in the valley of Gibeon to do his strange work, and bring to pass his strange Act Isay 28: 21. And tho we but see in part hereof, yet may we now know and understand upon these times past, more then such who was then present actors on the stage could reach in discerning the intents of providence when things were in their first mould, as is now clear in their after tendency and result; nor could possibly have that judgment of the Work of God in some parcels as may be now attained, when it's in a more full and entire frame; when such a sight is sett before us, as should call to have our souls bowing down with an awful regard and homage at so august, and immediate a discovery of the Majesty of God in his Work and actions before this Generation.

A 111. Head on this Subject, that I would offer some thoughts on, is as to the Lords singular way of dealing with the publick State of Britain, and Ireland beyond any other of the Reformed Churches in this last age; and is indeed a Subject of serious regard, to consider what manner of time hath our lot been cast in, and the measure of that talent for observation, we stand accountable for upon such great and extraordinary events as hath occurred: but here I have desired to have my thoughts translate, to what hath been from the first entry on so marvelous a series of providence, about the state of these Nations, for almost fifty

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Tears past, for a more clear prospect how each *step* herein in its *successive place*, and *room*, hath tended to give *light* to another; which I shall restrict wholly to the more *immediate appearances* of *God*, from what hath been *mens part*, and actings upon such a *diversity of interests* as might too visibly be seen to influence many in their *way*; and offer but a *few serious reflections* on the same, to one who can more clearly *observe*, and discern things of that kind.

1. That it's sure *Britain and Ireland* hath been of late a *Theater* of such *strange and extraordinary vicissitudes* in it's *publick state*, from the *Year 38. of this age*, as in no times past can be resembled; what *wonderful Revolutions* did then successively follow other, and were made the *object of mens sense*, as could not possibly have had credit or been a matter of *Faith*, if the same should have been foretold, and may justly render such a *period of time* unto this *day*, to be matter of astonishment to any of a serious spirit. It is true there is no *time* wherein the *Lord* hath not given some more *singular discoveries of himself*, and these *changes of providence* which are in the *personal case of Christians*, and lyes more close and near to their *Sense*, then things of a *publick concern*, are oft so extraordinary as would be not easy for others to credit; but it must be said what we have seen here, and may know of the work and appea-

rances of God in that *Land* can never be a *Subject of ordinary thoughts*.

2. It is known how an *avenging Sword*, which was *bathed in Heaven*, had it's *commission thence*, to go forth againſt both *Britain*, and *Ireland*, and did not *cease* to perſue it's end until theſe *flourishing Nations*, was made a *viſible field of blood*, yea did not *reſt*, until in the righteous, and *Soveraign diſpoſal of God*, a *potent and ſettled Monarchy* there, of a *long deſcent* having no fear, or *oppoſition* from any *forren power*, was yet *broke*, and made *void*, and did fall in their *high places*; and what an account this ſhould have been to the *World*, if it could have been poſſibly ſeen or judged in the *Year 40*. what the *50 Year* following was to bring forth, and was then in the boſome of ſo ſhort a time.

3. But when thus the *Lord did once appear*, and go forth in a *judiciary way*, we might ſee how each of theſe *three Nations* had their *proper ſhare*, and *meaſure allotted* in the *ſtrokes*, and *judgments* of that time, tho in ſome different method and manner; there beeing a more ſingular part assigned to *poor Ireland* then, by the *Holy and juſt God* in that *bloody and terrible Scene*, which was acted there, yet this was in *common* to the *whole of theſe Lands* that it was an *intefine Sword*, and not of a *forreiner* that was then call'd for, which ſpoke

spoke the *Judgment* to be the sorer and more of divine wrath in it; where on part of a Nation, is made the *rod*, and executioner of his judgment on another, and their destruction from amongst themselves.

4. If it be considered, what manner of time, that was of so extraordinary things, it may be obvious, how this followed a long and unusual settled calm, and tranquillity, which had gone before in the publick State of these Nations, when so great a flame had been round about; it was immediately after a bloody Sword had done its work in Germany, which from the Year 30. had brought with it such dismal effects there; but what would seem most astonishing here, that tho a time of the patience and long suffering of God, had in a singular manner gone before, & the treaty of the Gospel might be seen to have a small acceptance, and such judicial effects, with most of that Generation, when the Red Horse, and its Rider went forth to take peace from such a part of the earth, yet was not the height of Profanity, and Atheism nor measure of, sin then in these Nations come near to such a degree, as is now the measure of this time, or had any such prodigious appearance; only we see not yet what is coming to answer this.

5. It is not above 40 Years past, since we might see a powerful state, & commonwealth both raised and formed in these Nations on so great a ruine, had

gone before, and thus such a new and wonderful *Scene of Providence* brought forth on the stage, which made a *Revolution in the civil state* of that nature. a *Britain* had never before known; a *State* whose strength whilst it stood firm was made formidable both by *Sea and Land* to the *Nations* about, with so strong a tide of success, as nothing was able to stand against the same, but all essays, which tended to an *opposition* then, most visibly frustrate, and no plots, or mine laid so deep and close, which did not spring upon themselves who wrought therein; such was the concurrence of favourable things, and in so strange a manner until they had stood out that tryal wherein they were then sett, how they should answer the call, and intent of such a Providence.

6. But when the eyes of most every where was aloft, as to the issue of this settlement, and all humane contrivance, or forecast put to a stand herein, on what side the ballance might cast amidst such different Parties, and interests as was on foot; it was then as with an amazing earth quake, that the whole foundation was razed, and tho it was unquestionable that many of a serious spirit, and design in the things of God was amongst such, yet whilst the date of their commission was once expired, and kepted not themselves in the way of mercy, they are at last brought to know what it was to have God against them; a God impartially hating sin before whom it is more highly

aggravate and provocking the higher Profession of his way and truth men stands under, yea then was it that it might be no less clearly seen, how in the same manner of their raising, by a most visible series, and irresistible course of Providence, so was there fall, and down casting made wonderful; there Councils disordered, dispirited in their resolutions wherein the ebb did run as low, in impressions of fear and despondency on their spirits, as it had once lowed, who sometimes before they knew what it was to be acted above their own ordinarie reach; and thus as in a moment might it be seen how this frame and mould was broke as without hand. This was the second overturning in the publick State of Britain, in a very short time after the former, answerable to that Ezek. 21: 27. *I will overturn, overturn, &c.*

7. It is now that a great, and *marvellous change* we may see again go over these Nations, & an other piece of the *Work of God* brought forth on the stage, and new Actors made use of herein; which caused great thoughts of heart to know, what aspect such a crisis might have on the publick State of Religion; then was the Regal Power, and Government in Britain, raised again to its highest splendor and extent, and this change in such a manner accomlisht as the most judicious, and discerning spirits stood amased to see over what oppositions, and difficulties, which seemed insu-

perable, this was carried; and that surely it was the *same hand who threw them down*, which did then *lift them up*, with whom it is easie to make a *way where there is none* for any peece of his *Work*, when he goeth forth herein.

8. But when it might have been hoped and expected such *extraordinaire providences* should work on *these who were most interess'd in this great Restauration*, when it was not there *Sword* or *Counsel*, but the *finger of God*, which wrought the same; and that surely this might put a more then ordinaire weight how to *restore the Nations unto God*, who had *restored them to the supream Power, and Government* over the same, loe then was it in the *Room hereof* that these things might be seen.

1. How the *Sluces* were immediately *let open*, for an *impetuous flood*, and *deluge* of *wickednesse* to break in over the whole *Iste*; and *unbridled licence* to all *immoralities*, and *impiety*, and no restraint but what might tend to promote the *Kingdom of Jesus Christ* amongst men; so as these *Years past* since the *60.* hath tended to lay a *load of guilt on Britain* beyond the *measures of any times past*, and is still lying upon the same; which will be found *sore and heavy* in the issue if *Soveraign Grace* do not wonderfully interpose.

2. As it was then that such a *crisis* had so dismal and mortal an aspect there within these *heights of Profanity* vvhich did go over *all banks*, & beyond an *ordinaire cure or relief*, so there might be
seen

seen a *new way* and *unusual methods* of sinning; and a new progress, and advance in *Atheism*, beyond what hath been known in any times past, yea this with such confidence in the publick light, and before the *sun* as might be an amasement even to the internal spirits to think how far they were out gone by such who were of humane race this way. 3. But it was herewith also, when it might have been thought, that *God should stay his hand* no longer or forbear, that the *seal of their commission*, whose power had then the *greatest influence* might be discernable to all; that they were assuredly *established for judgment*, and had such a judicial work under their hand; so as the most *destructive designs* of that party for a further *Ruine to the Church*, seemed still then to have the greatest success; and no attempts or oppositions whatsoever could withstand the same or stop it's course, until their *measure*, and the *Epha* was further filled up, but such who did most *hasten to brake prison* as it were *before the time*, found their *bondage grew stronger* hereby.

9. But whilst such was thus at work, and acting so dismal a part on the publick *Theater of Britain*; lest they should reckon that *surely God had forsaken the earth*, and that the Cry of such prodigious wickedness was not so loud as to go up to *Heaven*; then was it that *he came down in a visible way*, to make himself known, and bring near his judg-

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ment, with a very tremendous voice; then was it that he gave a special commission to one of the three great Judgments the devouring Pestilence to go to the most eminent and conspicuous part of Britain, and the publick Seat of the Regal Power and Authority; and make that great City desolate for a time, and make their dwellings void of Inhabitants, in the Year 65. yea in an extraordinary Conjunction did double such a warning by putting them in a flame, that it might speak as a publick Herauld to these Nations, and thus give a Second Cry, that when his Wrath was begun to kindle a little, men might meet him in the way of his Judgment ere it come to the utmost, and a greater wo follow thereon. This surely was the voice of God by a most stupendous dispensation, and does speak still to this day, tho there may be few now to hear it. This was a Entry of Judgment, and stroke of that kind on which the Lord did put a most discernable impress of his Greatness, and Terror:

10. Yet even then after this there was a most observable Pause, and tender forbearance, in the way of the Lord to bring Judgment a further length; the God of Patience, who does not easily destroy the Work of his own Hand, and bears long ere a hight of sin does extort the last Stroke of Vengeance, did then give such a new breathing, or long intermission, as to any extraordinary Acts of Judgment; but did herewith send

send new Offers, and Conditions of Peace, before the decree bring forth Zephani 2: 2. so as the next great warning, which was given to these Nations, was in an other way and method; to take a new trial how this yet would work by a most rare preventing Providence, in the discovery of the Popish Plot, which under the shadow of civil Authority had been so long hatching, and ripening until this mine was ready to spring, to a visible Ruine of the whole protestant Interest in these Nations. This was a singular step of Divine Providence, tho the sence hereof may be gone off the Spirits of most, wherein he made us see that he was yet still watching over these Lands for their good, when they were not aware and would not only warn, by so awaking a Providence, but turn that contrivance against the contrivers, if so this might at last Work, and answer the intent hereof.

But now I must further add, what lyes nearer to our sight and observation, upon this extraordinary course, and Conduct of Providence from the Year 60. to that late call we have been sisted under, to see what the Year 88 following did bring forth; and here to fix our thoughts with a deep advertency, on this strange sight and turn of providence; which the most wise Discerners could not some time before, have ever supposed on principles of Reason, or by any natural connection of things; a turn, and vicissitude of Providence of such a kind where men may see the Name & Majesty of God,
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in some *august*, and *singular way* shewed forth thereon, and his arising to make way for his Power and *immediate Appearance* in such a manner as had not been known in former times: This is indeed a peece of the *Work of God* that might bring near the *Sense of a Godhead* to the conscience of the most ordinarie Oblervers, and what ever sad, and *Judicial signs* be too evident this day of the improvment made by most hereof, yet should it deeply concern us, that the *Glory and Honor of God* in so great a *discovery of himself* be not *darkned or obscured*. This is a *Work* we see but *in part*, and the *first Scene*, of what is yet further in bringing forth, and can be little knowvn or taken up by the nearest *events* of Providence untill the *Vision-Speak*, and the vail be further taken off the same: but it is sure herein that these of the most prejudged Spirit at such a *Providence* hath been constrained to see, that this was by an *immediate divine Hand*, contrare to the ordinary *Course*, and *Actings of Second Causes*; and how such vvho most eminently acted as *Instruments herein*, vvhat ever access or advantage, they had of *Resolution*, *Spirit*, and *Counsel* in such a *Work*, yet vvhere then only called forth to stand still, and see a *higher Power* moving in the same, vvho did there *look down as in the morning watch* to trouble the *Motions of these*, who were against them, and in an instant *took off their Chariot wheels*, and made them knowv it was in vain,

vain, either to stand, or flee, vvhhen they had God against them, who tho they reckoned to go forth, as at other times they knew not, that their day, and fatal period vvas now come.

Tho there was nothing common or ordinate in this *Stupendous work*, wherein such *incredible occurrences of providence*, did then concur as might constrain the *naturall conscience* of men to see a *supernaturall causality* herein yet did some things *Ipeciallie*, meet here to render this *Work of God* more highly astonishing. 1. That when the fears of most were at the furthest hight of some *desolating stroke* to accompanie the same, where the *contrare parties*, were so stated as the one could not stand but on the ruine of the other; and their interest on every side so *extensive*, and great, yea when in no times past the *harvest of the earth*, and in these parts thereof, seemd more ripe for putting in the *Syckel*, yet even then did the Lord in his soveraign and marvelous disposal spare; and went not forth as at other times, with garments rolled in blood nor did the *actings* of his providence appear so terrible as when *presages of judgment* were more discernable; but as this was the opening of the *first scene* & who sees what God is to do, who knowth his mind, as to these great changes in the *externall state of this western part of the World*, by such a *remarkable entry* to the same; but this may be fully clear to any who does wisely consider the *Work of the Lord* herein, that this

this was a *new* and *higher* tryall which he would yet once more take of *these nations*, and did therefore hold his hand, when the stroke seemd ready to fall down. 2. It might seem unaccountable to all reason, such a *conjunction*, and concurrence of instruments as was in this work; for tho the appearance of some herein who did most *eminently* appear, and *act*, did witness *speciall*, *high*, and *heroick* motions in the same; yet how *vast* & *nume-rous* a part was imbarcked upon this *interest*, and in behalf of the *Protestant Religion*, who could claime no roome or title in the very form, and *vi-sible* profession of *Christianity*; or to have any place in the outter court; but it might here with amaze-ment be seen how upon the *one side*, were such slated, who maintaind *Christs* bodily presence in the earth, in that sacrifice of the mass, as the *hith-boleth* of their profession; and on the other side how great a part was there who did ridicull all revealed Religion, and seemd not to beleeeve his *reall* presence in heaven. But here was it discernable what a return this was by the voice of providence, to that *grand engine*, and too known a *design* of the *Romish spirit* for many years past, to take vway for popery, by *destroying* men, especially the youth in *Britain*, in the *moralls* of *Christianity*, and to take thus off all serious *Sense*, and *weight* of Religion from their *Conscience*, that herein this deep of Hellish Policy did at last turn against themselves, and tho they judged themselves
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secure from any *serious* influence of Religion on such a Party, yet could they not secure them from *acting as men* on principles of reason, who could not but see the interest of Popery, and of their *civil Rights*, and *Properties* were incompatible; yea that tho they were acted from no *internal motives* on a *Religious Interest*, it could not be easie to join in with such a Religion, as was made up wholly of *external Rites*, and *ceremonial Severity*, and *Strictnesse*, and had no possible consistency with it self. But if we seriously ponder this *great vicissitude of Providence* in it's *Conjunction*, with what hath gone before, it's here we must see a *thrid*, *marvelous overturning*, which in one and the same age, hath been *successively* in these Kingdoms, according to that fore-mentioned Scripture Ezek. 21: 27. *I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it shall be no more until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it*: which is to be understood there, of such great *Revolutions*, as should in their proper order follow upon other. For tho this had a respect, then to these *great shakings* which was to come upon *Juda*, and the *House of their Kings* in the entry of their *captivity*, yet may none bound the intent of the *Holy Ghost* in this *Prophecy*, as if there only it was to take place, and had not a *Respect* to some further accomplishment of the same in after times, which surely was since, never more clear in the event then in this late

wonderful Series of Providence, that hath been in
 these *overturnings*. But now let me speak here-
 with, what hath been sometimes *deeply affecting*,
 how there is something yet more *solemn and extra-
 ordinaire now in this thrid call*, then all that hath
 gone before, to be *awakening to this generation*,
 and that which with too clear evidence may be
 judged the *last cry and call*, such as hath no *dark
 or uncertain sound* therewith to the *State and
 Churches of Britain*, and unto all *ranks* there,
 if there be not a resolute shutting of our ear at the
 same, that this is assuredly the voice of the Lord,
 „ I will yet once more take proof and tryall of these
 „ Lands, which I did choise, and in so singular
 „ a way deall with beyond other Churches and
 „ Nations; and will yet respite the last stroak of
 „ Judgment; and if tendernefs and forbearance
 „ in a most surprising and extraordinare display
 „ thereof will once work; if the actings of pro-
 „ vidence such as could not of late have been be-
 „ leevd by men will once reclaim, and return
 „ Britain and Ireland again unto God, I will
 „ then take of both their fetters and fears, and
 „ give a new settlement to their civill rights and
 „ interest, will cease their adversaries with terror
 „ and trembling, and yet spare their blood; will
 „ sett such also upon the *Throne*, who shall seek
 „ the good and welfare of their People, under
 „ whose shadow ye may ly down safely with-
 „ out dread either of the terrors by night or such

„ af-

,, affrightments by day they were once under ;
 ,, and take off any fears of external force. But
 oh if this *voice* can not be *heard*, when it is so
clear and audible which if some knew ever any
 thing, or had discerning of the ways of God and
 of the *times*, they cannot but *hear*, this to be the
present voice of the time, it then seems to be
 come to the *last and highest tryalls* that these Na-
 tions ever stood under ; when such *extraordinary*
measures of divine patience, and *long suffering*,
 and so long a day given to repent must either be
speedily answered, or it be found that the *stroke*
 will be the more terrible, when it comes, the
 longer it hath been deferred ; that threatned judg-
 ment shall assuredly at last come to a year of re-
 compence, yea to a precise day of the *spotless Ven-*
geance of God, when his spirit will no more strive
 with men, when he will clear his Justice, and go
 forth to see the *Authority of his Laws and Senten-*
ces of his Word ratified in the execution thereof ;
 when no *Intercessor* shall be then heard tho a
Noach, Daniel, and Job were upon the earth ;
 and it shall be then no more possible to hold off
 that long threatned *stroke*, or turn Judgment out
 of his way then for men to stop the course of the
Sun to recall the day and years that are past, or
 make void the *Ordinances of Heaven*, but then
 will the *Works of God* gett a hearing, when his
Words could not.

A IV. Head, on this subject; which I must join in with the former, that is of great weight, and consequence, is this; to know what aspect, such extraordinary providences of these times past, now hath on the churches there, and whither so great a crisis, as hath been in the publik State of affairs, hath more promising, or threatening signs, therewith. It was the highest part of Hezekiah's observation, upon that great deliverance he met with Isai. 39. not to see only God in his immediate hand herein, but how his heart, was toward him in the same; as is there expressed thou hast loved my soul, out of the pit of corruption, for so does the originall render it. A losing sight of providence, in what the Lord doth speak to men thereby, maketh way not only for great shakings, but to read the sense thereof, contrair to its intent; and tho there be a regarding by all, the visible effects of providence, and what herein lyes nearest to our sense, yet few goes a further length in their observing. It is undeniable that an extraordinary condescendence of grace, and of the long suffering of God, might be seen in these great things here done of late, but the next enquiry lyes here, how such an unusual application of providence does work. It was upon some serious thoughts hereof, and this present State of things, I sett myself, for more clear discerning of the way of the Lord and his voice to this generation in these astonishing changes

changes hath gone over the same *of late*, to have my own spirit fix'd herein, and some higher strenthning on the *faithfulness* of his truth; but in the first place, there are some undoubted principles of truth, which I would mention here, and must hold by, as truths which are of ane *eternall verity*, and may have a clear *applicatory light*, to the present day we are in.

1. That it's sure, the *most notable mercies* which hath been bequathed of the Lord, either to churches, or persons, have also been an entry to the greatest of judgements, when *not answered*; it was with the brightest sunshine of ane *immediate appearance* of his hand, and ane *extraordinary course* of miracles, that Israel, *entred into the wilderness*; whereon so black a night of *dismal providence* did fall; and is it not the same voice which is now speaking to us, that we have *Malach. 2. 2. if ye will not lay to heart, to give glory to my name, says the Lord of host, I will curse your blessings.*

2. It stands ever sure, and *unchangeable*, that God will never return to a people, against whom he is wroth, untill the *cause of his departure* be taken away, for both the same *date*, and *measure*, which mens *forsaking of God*, doth bear, the same also does his *departing* bear unto them, and tho *repentance* where it is in truth, can never be in vain, yet may it come to late, to prevent *temporal judgment*, or to regain ever again, a *season*

of acting for God, when there is a more eminent call thereto, at one time, then another.

3. It is an *unchangeable truth*, which varies not, with the changes of time, *that there is no condition on the earth can be safe* whither as to a Nation, or Person, were it never at such advantage, in external things; wherein they cannot say, *God is with us herein*, and *we are designing for him*; as on the other hand, it must be founded wholly on *Atheism*, where the *state*; and *danger of a Nation is not judged from the sins thereof*, and the *measure of the same*, more then from any *visible hazard*; for tho particular places, and people, under a Profession of Christ, comes not to the same *hight in filling up the measure of sin*; yet it must surely have it's *fatal period*, when *deferred Judgment* will nat stay on day longer.

4. What ever uncertainty be in humane things, yet is this *unchangeable*, and *sure*, that *such who inherit the same sins of others*, against whom God hath appeared in any *eminency of Providence* shall *inherit the same Judgements*; which hath not only been measured out to such as hath gone before, but are *pledges to after times* of what may be expected. For as the *way of grace*, changeth not, and the *redeem'd of the Lord*, as dear to him now, as ever; so is he *immutably just*, and his ways keeps the same measure with his revealed truth, so as a *Solid Interpretation of Scripture*
needs

needs no extraordinary Prophetic Spirit, to infer Judgment, from sin, where there is no serious returning unto him, and when the Lord God hath spoken, who can but Prophecy Amos 3:8.

5. It is of unquestionable evidence also, that national sins, wherein the body of a Nation, and People unite, and hath a joint accession herein; when it is thus the publick Sin of a Community, must meet with a Stroke, and Judgment within time of as publick extent, and cannot be laid over in this respect to the Judgment of the great day, when once it's measure is filled up here; since else the Glory of God in his truth, and remunerative Justice, should not have on such an account, a Vindication before the World, in the sight of Angels, and Men; if his spotless Judgment should not thus bear some proportion, to the nature of that guilt; the God of truth hath given his Word, and Dominion, and Authority over Nations both to pluck up, and to plant, as well as over persons, which can never be made void.

6. There can be no doubtfulness here also that it is simply impossible for a church to subsist, or preserve it's station in a Church state by a naked external form only; or in the purity of religion, without some life, and power, of the same; since if there were no reall inbringing, or building up of the elect there, then the Gospel had no more work in the same, and no interest were there for the Spirit of God to keep fellowship with; so that

the *intrinsic strength* of any *particular church*, yea of the *politick bodie* therein; lyes not in the *number*, or *bulk*, but in the *weight*, nor is't the *extensive growth* of a *church* to a *visible profession* that makes, a *reall increase*; but how great an *interest* does a *few* such, whose way is the *life*, and *power of that doctrine they profess*, make in the *place* they are in; tho this seems litle apprehended, what *influence* the *hid part* in a *nation* of *humble, serious christians* hath on the *external State* thereof, and on the *administration of providence* in the *world*, who makes *least appearance* in it, by a *near entercourse* with *heaven*, and by such *high value*, and regard which they have there, so as the *Lord* hath even *subjected* the *greatest vicissitude* and *changes* of the *time* to the *intercession*, and *prayers* of such.

Let me but *add* this herewith, that tho the *Lord* does ever *distinguish* betwixt the *Godly*, and the *residue* of men in times of *publick calamity*, and *Judgments*, so as not to lay them *common* herein with the *wicked*, yet on the other hand, it is not a *numerous Party*, even of most *choise*, and *Reall Christians* in a *Land*, will stand in the way of *wrath*, and of some *dismal stroke*, when the *sett time of Judgment* is once come; but may be then such with a *Nation*, when there is no more hearing, or *intercession*, but for that *instance* of the *Lords* sisting his *judgment*, if there had been but 10 *Persons* in the *Cities of the Plain*: it
was

was an eminent return to *Abraham*, and extraordinary act of condescendence, that makes no rule. There was a choise and numerous remnant in *Judea*, who sought the Lord then, when that dismal night of the *Captivity* came on; and it is of late, that such a tremendous instance, we have before us in the *Case of Bohemia*, where so conspicuous a part then was of a *People zealous for God*, when such a publick overwhelming stroke came on.

But now in the *Second Place* I must speak a few words to what seems in some singular way, to speak to *Britain*, and *Ireland* by very sad, and monitory signs, beyond any of the Churches about: it is, I know, easie, and usual to challenge the darkness of *Providence*, more then to regard, what is clearly revealed to us, as the intent & voice thereof; and these are indeed sad, and dismal like dispensations, that tho they be not silent, but have a distinct, and audible voice, yet Seals no Instruction herewith, on the spirits of men. I confels a natural Respect, and tie, to such a Part of the earth, beyond any else; renders this to some, to be more heavie, and dreadful that if *Soveraign grace*, do not wonderfully interpose, it cannot be found in the course of divine Providence, since the beginning of time; that ever the measure of sin, contempt of a Deity, and oppositions to the Holy God in the designs both of his Word, and Providence hath come to such a hight as is vi-

sible in these Churches this day; but that some extraordinary appearance of Wrath, and Judgement from the Lord hath as visibly followed thereon; to be a publick monument, for after times, wherein these Remarks, are so unavoidable.

1. To what a strange, and fatal issue, hath that purest profession of Christ, in the Protestant Religion, which hath been long enjoyed there, now come, when such publik contempt, and scorn, is thrown upon the same, in the truth and power thereof, as a matter of their greatest abhorrence; when the most numerous part of the multitude, every where may be seen in a state of opposition to the dominion, and authority of God in his laws, yea such horrid tenets, as well as practices, even in the common sense of mankind may be discernable there, as in pagan nations under some awe, and restraint of a natural conscience would be affrighting; since every nation will walk in the name of their God; but these are such as have at once divested themselves of all hope and cast off all fear, or dread, of a wrath that is to come.

2. And as to one special evidence hereof, what cause may it be to meditate terror, as to the present state of these nations, when a spirit of blasphemy is let forth there and gott such prevalence amongst all ranks, as it's accounted a matter of fashion, and breeding, to go a length beyond others, in tearing that blessed name of God, in

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whose hand is their breath, by profane, and blasphemous oaths. This is a thing by it self, that's purely diabolick, and hath nothing humane in it, can have no affinity with the flesh, nor is as an ordinarie degree, of a reall possession by the Devil, and much sadder, then that which hath been on many by constraint, and putting a force upon their tongue to blaspheme, which otherwise would have been a horror, and dread, since this is by consent, and a delight, that could have no possible rise, but from pure enmity to the Holy God, yet is it now come to such a prodigious height, as if Britain did design a proper monopoly this way, and Preheminence, of the same, above all nations of the earth; tho none more will pretend a national love, and respect, to it's standing, and interest, to whom that saying of one of the ancients, may be applicable, if such would once give it a hearing; *si tibi non vis parcere, attamen parce Patriae tuæ*; doe we thus provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger then he; but when such a contagion seemes to be past the restraint of humane Laws who declares their sin as sodome, will not the great lawgiver, at last take it under his hand, to vindicate his authoritie.

3. But what a symptome, is this herewith of approaching judgments when to such a hight, and so universalie, the corruption of the youth, is in this day, and these parts, in so aneusual a way; and among such, a Spirit of Atheism, and profanity,

nity, is in that manner got up, as may be sadly foreseen, what a *dismal night* must follow hereon, and cause these know, whose respects seem to run so high for a *national interest*, that what does thus *strike*, at the root, truth & Godliness amongst men, in so strange a *debauchery*, of the *generation that's coming up*, gives the same stroke to the greatest *security of government*, and to what founds the greatest obligations, to *civil, or moral duties*; yea hath a native, and unavoidable tendency to ruine the *politick bodie*, to *emasculate the spirits of men*, and obstruct the *vigorous improvements*, of their *natural parts*, and will in a short time depress, and change the *very genius* of these once *renowned nations*, if there be no *due application*, of the proper, and *adequate remedie* for the same.

4. And do we not with too great evidence now see, how much that *old Protestant spirit* which was in the *power*, and *life of that profession* is gone, and extinguished this day; before which the *Romish interest* could not, possibly stand when *humane power and might* did little concur therewith; so as it may be a strange but too visible *remark*, how that *distinction*, hath got such place in *Britain*, beyond any other *reformed churches* else, which is betwixt the *Protestants interest*, and *politick concerns* thereof, and the *Protestant Religion*, which lyes in the *pure doctrine of Christ*, in its *truth*, and *efficacy on mens soul*

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and *practice* ; when thus may be seen , what a throng and easie concurrence is there to *promote the one* , and bear the highest respects thereto , so far as they find a *private interest* , and *external motives* renders this necessary , who does *hate* , and to the utmost *oppose themselves to the other* ; yea fears nothing more , then to have this get any *authority over their conscience* ; and oh thence it is that when *priveledge* and *propertie* upon a temporal interest , are as the *apple of mens eye* , when these are once touched , yet are the highest *indignities* , and *affronts to the honor of God* , and to his *truth* of a small regard.

5. But if we yet look further , in to the *Publick State of Religion* in these *Churches* , there may be a more astonishing sight , and of greater *abominations* still , answerable to that *vision* *Ezechiel 8* ; when within the precincts of a *Christian Church* , once so purely *reformed* , such a *party* is got up and growing , whose work is not onlie to take men off the serious work , and power of *Christianity* ; but to subvert wholly the *foundation of our faith* , under that late designation of *Deists* , and that men are now become so wearied of the *Christian Profession* , as were their power answerable to their will , they would bring in a new model of *paganism* , and fix themselves at last there. And oh is it come to such a day , after so bright a sunshine of the Gospell hath gone before , and after so great an *effusion of the Spirit of God* , that such a party

a party should be upon the encrease in so horrid an appearance, were it possible, to make void the whole frame of the Gospel, to juttle our ever blessed Redeemer, who once was the desire of the nations, off his throne, to thrust the crown off his head, the scepter of whose government is righteousness, & peace; and give, if they could, a mortall stroke to him, who is the life, and light of men, and by whose stripes we are healed, yea as if they could make their party good against that rod of iron, with which he bears rule over his adversaries. But what can these design to themselves to render humane being desirable here on the earth, except to have a share of the same priviledge, with the beasts, of the field, that within a little they should have no more being, and oh what a God does such deprive themselves of who only propitious, to poor man in Christ, and otherwise not the object of our trust, but of terror; yet is this way now come to that length, as it would seem to despise all moral releef.

6. I must yet add here, tho it be a very sad ungrateful Subject, how we are faine in a day, when the greatest discoveries of God, both in the way of Judgment, and mercy seems to have no affecting sense, or regard on this generation, and the great designs both of grace, and providence amidst such marvelous changes hath gone before, in that manner withstood as most seemes to unite there strength herein; even when this may be in a

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singular way applicable to *our time*, what the Lord did once speak to *Israel* by *Moses*; *your eyes have seen the great Acts of the Lord*, and these *great temptations, the Signs, and Wonders*, which he hath done in this *last age*; yet if *Sovereign* grace do not marvelously appear, it may be fear'd, that both the *voice of God* in his *Word and Works* hath discharg'd their commission, without any due regard to the same; and that judgment, and mercy after such extraordinary methods of divine patience have done their part, and is now come to such a *judicial withdrawing*, and departure of that *great Ambassador*, the *Spirit of God* from his *Church*, that there seems but small access to serious *Public Humiliation*, and *fasting*, or to call for *solemn Assemblies* for this end, except to *Personate*, & *Act* such a part as that of the *mourning Women amongst the Jews at Funerals*, and amongst these of the most *serious Spirit* in this day, such a restraint may be found of that *Seriousness* and fervor herein which once did appear, as renders it a more *ominous Presage* that there may be nothing to follow but that last sentence, *let them alone*; and must not all thus reason and judge, that as the interest of *Sacred Truth*, and the *Honor*, and *Glory of God* in mens subjecting thereto is of much higher value then any *temporal Interest*; so is the *Vindication* of the same before the *World* of a greater concern then the *stability or standing of Kingdoms*, yea to fear more deeply

deeply that such a *time*, how long so ever deferred, must at last take place, when his spotless procedure of *Judgement*, shall be then cleared fully; *shall I not visit for these things, shall not my soul be avenged on such a People.*

But now in the *third Place*, there is one *Inquiry* that should ly near, and hath a more then ordinary call for the same in such a day; to know *what is yet left*, and accessible in the *matter of duty*, that might be as a *door of hope* for the *Lords Returning* once more, and his respiting of *imminent Judgement*, when so great a *Ruine* is like to fall under the *Hand of this Generation*. I know any such thing will be to most as *matter of derision*, whose *fear*, and *hopes* of this kind goes no higher then *present Objects of Sense*, and it is little I can adventure to speak hereon, but as to any *measure of light* I have attained, I can no more question, that the same voice from the *Lord*, is now going forth to the *Churches of Britain*, and *Ireland*; then that I read what is spoke to *Juda* *Ezekiel 22: 30.* And I sought for a man amongst you that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gate before me for the Land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none; therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my Wrath, their own wayes have I recompens'd on their Heads, says the *Lord God*. It's sure then *wrath* was near to a breaking forth, when this *last call* came yet with an offer of *Peace*,

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nor is it questionable there was a serious part then who were deeply affected with such a time, tho it was not easy to find one of a *truly raised spirit*, to do and endure something more then ordinar for God, when so great a *ruine* was ready to fall under their hand; but to clear the *import of such a call*, with respect to the publick State of the *Churches of Britain*, under this *allusion*, here made use of, to stand in a *gape and breach*, when the *Church as a defended City* is laid open to an extream and imminent hazard; I must speak a few things to be considered, what must follow if no *Intercessor* be found, to answer the voice of this call, by a suitable appearance herein.

1. Tho it may be now reckoned, that the sky is more clear as to the *State of Britain*, then for many Years past, when the *breach* seems to be made sure against either *Forrain or intestine Assaults*, and that in the way of reason and the ordinar course of humane affairs, things are come to a more leure and settled State, yet is there another *aspect* of things, that should deeply affect our spirits, when the *publick hazard* of the time is greater then from all *humane power*, and the party to be most feared, is assuredly *divine Wrath*, after a long interval of forbearance, that is ready to break forth in some extraordinary *Acts of Judgment*, for where a day of *atonement* goes not before, can no true deliverance be expected, to raise and settle these *Nations*; yet how rare are

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they who take this to heart, or tremble within
themselves on the thoughts of *Judgment* to be near,
if it does not appear from *natural* or *visible* causes,
tho' nothing be more discernable from *Moral*
Signs.

2. What ever present calm be from these tremors
and fears that have been of late, yet may
be judged whether it be a serious business, or no
to stand in such a breath as is this day, when the
greatest interest of our *Faith*, is laid open to such
numerous assaults; as there seems no less cause to
stand, and contend for the *Christian Cause* and
Interest now in these *Nations*, against such who
are under a visible Profession of the same, than
once was against the *Heathens*; whilst that *pr*
imitive Spirit, which was then a *Spirit of Power*
and of *Glory*, does too rarely appear; or these me-
asures of grace in such impressions as was then the
are under a sad and judicial restraint; more
being taken up so entirely with private refer-
ences of personal injuries, and bitter intestine
conflicts, as the sound of such a hazard cannot
be heard, until it be felt. It was the Power and
Evidence of Christianity on mens souls; that dis-
tinctly make *Protestants*; and made way for the
planting & settlement of the *Reformed Church*,
but it would seem now reckoned that the *Pro*
testant Interest can stand, tho' the *Christian Fair*
were extinct in the power and vitalls thereof, and
might easily be given up by the greatest part

this *Generation*, if it's *outworks* could be preserved, wherea *temporal Interest* renders that necessary; whilst that *magnetick power and vertue*, which the *Truth* once had on the World is not to be seen, or any deep sence of that Interest which Religion once had in the *Glory of a passive Testimony* for the same.

3. Is not the *gape and breach*, we have to stand in this day, of such a kind, that where the ancient *Love of these renowned Churches*, the *Love of their Youth*, and *Kindness of their Espousals unto God*, did so brightly shine forth after the *Reformation from Popery*, it is now resolved unto so dismal a change, as with most what ever is most lovely, excellent, and desirable in the *Revelation of the Gospel*, and should have the most attractive influence on mens soul, is visibly despoiled and vilified; yea which renders this *breach and gape* more dreadful, that after all the *cost & expence* which the Lord hath wared in planting, and letting forth a *vineyard to Britain*, sending *many Servants*, then at the first with the indearing persuasives of the Gospel, and on the other hand with solemn and expresse warnings of the hazard of such *Strikes of Judgment*, to come, as hath been afterwards felt; yet hath the return been in a continued and growing enmity against the *truth*, and instead of reedring the fruits of this *Vineyard* in its season, hath rather conspired to deride and despirefully use such as have come to

demand the same, and what can be judged will be the result hereof, if men have not concluded that God hath forsaken the earth; can it be thought that the *Breaches of these Nations* shall be bound up, but that they must widen further, there be not in some singular manner a standing up in this *breach*, to turn away his wrath; which is a service that comes now under our hand, as may not linger or stay, when warnings of so extraordinary a kind are reinforced; for this is a *call*, hath a *limited time and season* allotted thereto, that may have a *shorter period* then we apprehend when the door of *Intercession* hath been in such unusual manner kept open, and *Grace* hath so long interposed, before *Judgment* should come to a final execution.

4. I must add hereto what sence ought to be of the hazard of such a *breach*, when a sight of *Immortality and Ungodliness* is turned so open and visible, as if *Sathan* did essay to have an open *Throne* again set up, as once he had amongst the *Nations*; whilst the spirit of few are teased with any suitable impression of the same, lest this be the voice of the Lord without recalling, *shall not visit these things, shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation Jer. 5: 9.* and what a time is it when the *Reverence and Authority of Religion* is so far gone off mens spirits, that it each can bring up a private interest, and have some treasure of that kind laid up, they are under no fear of trea-
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furing up Wrath and Judgment; it was a rare example that of *Daniel*, who upon the foreseeing of a stroke which he was not to fear for himself, yet *was astonished for an hour*, and his thoughts troubled him, by reason of the strangenes of it *Dan 4: 19*. That there is a most choise and serious part yet in these *Nations* as is this day in the earth, is unquestionable, but even such who in these *difficult & perillous times* past, have been helpt to stand, and go through a variety of *dark and strange Dispensations*, I suppose have not found a time in a more singular way trying in the *matters of Conscience*, then is this day; and that there was never more hazard of an insensible wearing out from under former impressions of *duty* and the *ways of truth*, which once they had, or a more difficult part to have that *ancient fear*, and *tenderneß of light* kept in exercile which as the *apple of the eye*, may be easily hurt, but not so easily helped.

But tho it is clear that this voice and call for *standing in the gape and breach*, does respect all of a serious spirit in the things of God; yet are there some more eminently fitted from the Lord with peculiar Excellencies on their spirit then others, to appear on so high a service; which as it is a talent not bequeathed in vain, where this in a more remarkable way is let forth, so is it of greatest weight to know *time and opportunity* for this end, and when a *season of Providence* may

call to some higher improvement hereof for God then ever again may occur; yea it may be seen in how strange a manner the choicest instruments in the service of their day, are made to differ not only from others, but from themselves, as they are helped to answer such a *call*, and to know the Counsel of God herein. But that I may touch this more particularly, it is requisite to know who may be at the greatest advantage, and in nearer capacity then others for such a service, about which I judge these things will not be questionable. 1. That such as have a more *near and intimate converse with God* in this day, hath great room also in this service, to stand in such a *Gape*, yea to save a *Kingdom or Nation*, when Judgment is ready to break forth; these have their Soull kept in that manner under the power and attractions of the things of God, beyond the residue of men, as not to be affrighted or raken off from appearing for him by the force and prevalence of *example*; it is these who are at most advantage to discern the *Judicial Remove of the presence of God from the Church*, and the Generation they live amongst, and the imminent hazard of Wrath, and approaching Judgment; yea it's these who from *internal Motives* can find it easy to lay their dearest things at the stake, in behalf of the Truth and Glory of Christ in the Land they belong to, and without respect to private interest lay themselves in the way of a publick ha-

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zard with the Spirit of blessed Bernard, as he speaks, *Male in nos murmur hominum sit quam in Deum, bonum est si Deus indignetur uti pro clypeo.* 2. They are in a special way fitted to answer this call and service, who hath the Seale of any singular engagement; they are under to God, much on their heart, and what hereby they owe in a peculiar way to do for him, and for a more special service to be age they live in, to seek the interest and welfare of their People, to whom they have the nearest natural tye; which is that service for the Generation, and publick trust should ly near these who have had more then ordinarie receipts of mercy from the Lord, & of these specially it might be expected that they dare stand up for God, and the Interest of his Truth, tho they should stand alone herein, which surely in the issue will be found a safer standing then with the multitude, or such whole design for the publick interest goes no further, then their private concerns does influence. It is sure the Words of Mordechai Esth. 4: 13. *Are still directed to this day, think not with thy self thou shalt escape, for if thou altogether holds thy peace at this time enlargements and deliverance shall arise from another place, but thou and thy Fathers House shall be destroyed.* 3. But it is undoubted that this Service does in some peculiar way ly to the door of Princes and Rulers, according to their Station, who are of more publick relations then others; their Authority came

in with the *second Covenant*, which by the fall of man was rendred necessar, and have their Power derived from him, by whom *Kings Rule and Princes Decree Judgment Proverbs 8: 15.* to as the advance of the *Ghospel of Christ*, and Preservation of *Sacred Truth*, both in its purity and power, is made the object of their highest trust, yea what a singular blessing this is to a time, when such does eminently interpole upon any imminent hazard to the Church, and thus bears evidence that they have an *Uction from God on their heart* as well as their Office, And it came to pass *2 Chron. 34: 19.* that when the King heard the Words of the Law, that he rent his Cloathes, and commanded *Hilkia the Son of Shaphan &c. go, and enquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israël and in Juda, concerning the Words of the Book that's found, for great is the Wrath of the Lord that's poured upon us, because our Fathers kept not the Word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this Book.* This hath looked as a door of hope to *Britain* in the present day, when such of a serious & excellent Spirit have come to the Throne, if the sin of this Generation, as may be feared, be not come to that height, of a resolute opposition to any restoring means; but if the Authority of God should be thus taken off the conscience of men by so publik abounding Atheism and Impiety, it shall be found that the Honor and Authority of *Magistrates* will fall here-

herewith before men. 4. They have a peculiar access also to such a service for God, and the interest of the place they live in, who have more advantage then others by the Repute and Authority of their *Example*, to walk in a *countermotion to any publick and contagious evil of the time*, as are most prevalent, and thus to affright the bold and daring countenance thereof; this should be a honourable appearance to oppose the *Kingdom of Sathan*, wherein it's getting most remarkable strength and credit by the Customariness thereof. 5. But in a special way these who would aim at so high and blessed a *Mark* as this, must know some higher acquaintance with that *Mystery of Faith*, then what seems to be understood by most in this day, and of a reliance on God by a *particular trust*, yea the truth of such special assistances of the *spirit*, as can raise the soull to a higher resoluteness in the matter of duty by *opposition*, so as it can be born up amidst the strongest difficulties, from no humane interest, or the greatness of a party in the earth, but from the greatness of their *God*: It is true the way of beleeving is an *immutable Ordinance*, which God hath settled for the support and services of his People within time, and should be the *leading principle* of a Christians Life, to go through all conditions and changes in adventuring on that God, who is of infinite Power both to hurt and help, but it is one of the great experiments also of Religion, to

what a pitch and degree the Faith of some of the Saints hath been raised upon some extraordinary Service for the Lord, where no natural causes could influence the same, and above what they could in an ordinarie way reach. 6. Yet is not the door for such a Service shut on any who have an interest in the *Truth once delivered to the Saints*, but may still have some share and room in so great an *Undertaking for God*, and the Interest of his Truth; and should each of a serious spirit, design something *personally* for answering this call, to sustain a part in so choicet a service for the truth, suitable to their Station and Talent, it should bring a marvelous change therewith on the times, and cause another face appear in the publick face of the Church; nor is it expressible what the improvement of a *little strength*, when it hath been designed for the Lord, & under his call hath oft attained, which in no ordinarie way, or from any visible appearance could ever have been expected, yea what a marvelous use the soveraign God can make of a few nay of one, where his concurrence goes forth therewith.

But since the publick State of things this day is such as seems, to controul any confidence or hope for answering such a call, to stand in the breach of *so trying and hazardous a time*, I would speak a few things in the *third place*, which may put some more then ordinarie weight of this call on our spirits.

1. That as it's easy for the Lord to raise

and excite the spirits of men to such *duties*, as in the way of humane reason would seem wholly insuperable; so can it not be found in the *Records of times past*, that where grace did interpose in any singular way to *prevent Judgment*, and for recovering of a Church in some extreme case, but there hath also been something more extraordinary than at other times, in the acting forth and excitement of some *instruments*, to appear for God with a more Heroick motion on their spirits, then what hath been usual, and when he hath had a *saving work and design* to accomplish, then *Saviours have come upon Mount Zion* Obad. v: 21.

2. If it be a serious business to *discern the times*, we are in with respect to the *publick State of these Nations*, the voice of this *call* might then ly near our spirits, since if we *turn our eyes back*, it is demonstrably evident that the Lord hath not dealt so with any *Nation of the Gentiles* under the *New Testament*, as with the *Isle of Britain*, both as to eminent experiments of Providence, and the dispensation of Grace and measures of light, especially since it's recovery from the Power of Antichristian Darkness; so as it is not strange that he hath gone forth in a more singular way of Procedure therewith then other *Churches*, and tho *nothing is new under the Sun* as Solomon speaks, yet there may be seen some thing peculiar and astonishing as to the way and *Actings of Providence* there in this age, as will not be easy for the most judi-

judicious *Observers*, to find a precedent for the same; and it we now consider the *present time*, as things are stated after such resolute oppositions to the voice of these *times past*, and when no vicissitudes of Providence hath yet put any stop to a growing height of *Apostacy*, as may bee too visible there; yea that it's sure, God will not lose his Work or Intent in the great expence he hath been at for *reclaiming this Generation*, it may be then without a *Prophetick Light* seen that something *very extraordinary is near*, either in the way of *Judgment* or *Mercy*; so as this service and appearance in the present *Breach* seems to be in another manner call'd for beyond that of an ordinarie day, when there is yet room, and the door of intercession not absolutely shut; but if this seem light, it will be found that the longest measure of *divine Patience* will come to a *Year and a Day at last*.

3. It is sure and unquestionable also, that the answering of this call, is the alone way to have *God interess'd in the publick State and Concerns of Britain* in the present day, before whom all *Nations are as nothing*, and the greatest *Train of Inferiour Causes*, when their furthest strength and activity is put forth, of no weight, when he withdrawes his influence as *Job 7: 8. thy eyes are upon me, and I am not*. It may be matter of serious remark, that in this late time something more then ordinarie hath appeared in the *French standing and strength*, and tho on principles of reason the

the Power of such an Adversary should not be such matter of fear, when an unusual concurrence of means is to stem such a tide, and under the conduct of so *Wise and Heroick a Leader*; yet on the other hand, *Ashur the rod of my anger* *Isay 10: 5. is a formidable Party*; and it is a threatening case when the security and interest of a Nation stands more by a *permissive Providence*, and singular long suffering of God, then by *promise*. The discovery of *hid Plots and Contrivances against the Government* hath been of late in a special manner remarkable, but oh! there is one Plot, which is of another nature, to be above all fear'd, that's caried on not in the *dark*, but in the *publick light*, to betray these Nations to the Common Adversary, it is such a Plot, as was betwixt Balak and Balaam, to divide Israel from God, that their strength might depart from them, when once there is a sad departure from him; and it's sure these, who ever are interest'd herein, hath the most active concurrence to weaken, and bring low the *Polinick Body of Britain*, to hasten on a dismal night, and advance the interest and strength of visible Adversaries: But if there be no suitable appearance in this day, to counteract so dismal a Plot, and the growing strength of such a Conspiracy herein, there may be then too just cause for these of the most serious spirit, to long to have their part acted, and be gone off the stage ere they see the dreadful Effects hereof:

hertof: and what ever advantage be of *external means*, it might be too easy then to judge of future things, where an inordinate respect to men, and a low regard to keep in with God, is one of the publick signs of the time we are in. I know it's no easy thing to improve the *Providences of times past*, that are at any distance from us, or to bring them home by a just *application* to the *present day*, and to compare what we now see of the Way and Workings of God, with what hath already past in these *late Years*, but if this were more improved and understood, there might be another view and discerning of the *times we are in*, and *what of the night* now it is: we have seen in some singular way, the rising and falling of humane interests so contrary to humane reason and expectations, as might tend fully to clear from what hand they came, and to what Issue they were directed: we have seen such *Revolutions*, which the *Churches of Britain* hath gone thorough, and hath past over the same, as seem yet little understood, and it must be a perverse and false Judgment, if it be supposed, that we have no more to do herewith, but a naked remembrance of such things in the matter of Fact, and what was mens way and part therein. But that I may come more near on this *Subject*, there are some things that need to be further understood thereon.

1. That it's sure when such a *Gape* this day is
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lying open betwixt us and *divine Wrath*, there can be no standing herein without a serious *interceding Work with God* by immediate addressees, when its unexpressible what a mighty efficacy this hath on the World, and the great changes thereof, and how far he hath subjected the *Interest of Nations to the Prayers of the Saints*. It is a hopeful sign when *Rulers and Magistrates do call and excite a Nation to publick fasting and prayer*, but in the ordinarie way it's followed this day, upon so extraordinary an application to the Majesty of God, it may be just matter of fear, if such essentiall requisites be not concurrent therewith. 1. That the same *Authority and Power be interposed for a serious and impartial Inquiry as to National Sins*, which are most prevalent in the time, where the current of the multitude runs, and hath the loudest cry to *Heaven*; since otherwise a tolemon address of this kind might bear a sad evidence of *Atheism and Impiety*, to suit *National Deliverances and Protection*, and that the Holy God would be *with us*, and propitious to us for the publick State of the Nation, whilst we are not *with him*, yea that he would not forsake us, whilst our forsaking him is so visible, which is an effect to plead that the most *settled & unalterable Establishments of his truth* be made void, and rescinded for our sake; yea can another return be expected in such a case then what is *Ezech. 14. 4.* 2. That something then upon so extraordinary an address

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to Heaven, might be designed by *publick Authority in a promissary way* to be made practicable as should tend to a more visible resolute withstanding the growing strength of such *National evils* and may thus bear a publick testimony and appearance against them from such who stand under so high a trust unto God for this end.

2. Where this great *service* is taken to heart for *standing in the gape this day* before God, there needs also some clear discerning of the *end and design of Providence, in these astonishing successive changes*, which hath of late gone over this *Generation*: it's true there may be many *ends* at once reached in any signal piece of the Work of God about his Church, yet is there surely still some *higher & great end* which he hath therein, that should be most deeply enquired into, and tho I can attain little this way in respect of others, yet may with humble confidence say, that under a serious pressure of spirit I have sought to understand the same, and how to trace the *Lines of Providence* in the strange *Revolutions of this age, to the Center of that great Design of the Lord therein*, to which all these *oppositions*, which hath been made to the same hath so remarkably brought on their own fall and breaking in that way, but this I must further insist on, tho there needs specially a turning our eyes *fast back to times past*, for discerning the *Work of God in our day*, and to see in what a

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circuit divine Judgment did go from on part of
 the *Reformed Churches* to another, with the very
 first date and entry upon this remarkable age; and
 when that *Sword* which was bathed in Heaven,
 and had it's commission to Germany; and Bohem
 in that fore, and long intestine War there, had
 once done it's work; then did it in a succes-
 sive course enter on the *Churches of Britain*, and
Ireland; and a c p of trembling from the Lord
 put into there hand; and then did begin that
 great Scene of Providence which hath been since
 acted there; wherein, as in all the most remar-
 kable Steps, and Periods hereof; hath the voice
 of the Lord, been expressly pointing at this great
 end, and design in the same, for bringing his
 counsel more clearly to light, if we had eyes to
 perceive, and hearts to understand what is his
 work, and declared intent herein; which is that
 the Kingdoms of this World may become the King-
 doms of our Lord, and of his Christ, who shall
 reign for ever and ever Revelat. 11: 15: and that
 his Interest in these Nations, as a part of that in-
 heritance which was in a peculiar way given him
 of the Father Psalm 2: 8. be more fully asserted in
 the Glory of his Regal Power, against all such who
 would withstand the same: for which end may it
 be clearly understood what such an appearance
 did mean, in so strange an administration of
 providence by the *Sword* to these Nations in this
 age; what such unusual shakings and overturnings
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there, yea by such restless oppositions to any civil settlements, since the Lord begun to shake Britain; to make known this solemn period of time was come, and the days of the 7th. Trumpet, when our Lord Jesus should take to himself his great Power, and Reign, which had been so long darkened by the usurpations, and enmity of men there to; yea that he was surely gone forth, who hath that name written on his vesture, and thigh, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, to make good the same; and will have this name engraven, on all the ways, and actings of Providence, who must reign until he hath putt all his Enemies under his feet 1 Corintb. 15: 25. and the Nation, and Kingdoms, that will not serve him, shall perish, and these Nations shall utterly be layed waste Isay. 60: 11. for thus hath the Lord spoken, and is settled, sealed by the decree of him that chaingeth not. is true he hath been walking in the dark as to men in these times past; and even from his choise of people there hath been oft a hiding of his work, and keeping it out of their sight, amidst the strange changes, as hath put the most discerning to a stand; it might be easie to see mens intent in their actings, and under what influences they have moved; yea what bitter risings of heart, and quarrellings hath been upon the miscarrying of their ends; but this is an other sight, and of a higher concern, to see and discern wisely the Work of the Lord, and how amidst all the re-

lings of these strange *times*, his way, and course of providence hath been ever *steady*, and *sixt*.

3. It may be thus clearly seen, if our spirits were more deeply lett forth on such a *study*, that the *strength of our day*, yea the standing and security of the *publick state of these Nations*, does assuredly in a resolute concurrence, with this *great design of the Lord*; so as otherwise there can be no standing in the breach before him, to turn away his *wraith*. But since this *Subject*, of the *Catholick Right*, and *Kingdom of Jesus Christ*, over the *Kingdoms of this Earth*, is so strange a mystery to many in these times, and such different thoughts and conceptions are hereot; as I have desired to know the *way of truth*, on these sure *principles*, and *grounds*, that I might have full rest and settlement to my own spirit herein; so I may say, that in the clearness of this *light*, I have found a special strengthening in the *Christian Faith*, when with the furthest evidence it may be seen:

1. How that which is spoken of the *donative*, and *universal Kingdom of our Lord Jesus*, which was given him of the *Father*, as *incarnate*, and after his *Ascension*, is not to be understood of that which is his *essential*, and *natural Kingdom*, which did belong to his *person*, as he is the *brightneß of the Fathers Glory*, and *God equal with him*; but is such as was *promised*, and by special *donation* given to him, that the *ends and uttermost Coasts of the Earth*, should be his inheritance *Ps. 2: 8.*

and his Dominion to be from Sea, to Sea, and from the River, to the ends of the earth Psalm 72: 8. yea is the same which was given to him Dan. 7: v, 14. when he was invested, with *Dominion, Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages should serve him, &c.*

2. As there can be no suspence, or darknes in this, so is it no less clear, his entring on the administration of his *Mediatory Kingdom*, was reserved only to the times of the *N. Testament*, to which the *fall* of the 4 *greatest Monarchies*, which ever was in the earth, was direct, and subordinate, to make way for the same: and loe, here may we see the *first period* of the *visible Glory of Christs Reign*, and his entrance on the same, when after such strong oppositions, the *Pagan World*, was at last, made to *bow down*, and *fall* before his truth, and submit to him.

3. But herein it cannot be understood by this special bequeathment of the *Kingdoms of the World*, to be the *Lords*; in that sense only, of inbringing the *Elect* out of the same, or of his *internal Reign*, on the hearts of men, but that it lyes, in a *visible surrender*, and *subjecting* of the *collective body of Nations*, to the *Scepter of his Government*, when the *Princes and Kings* of the earth should subject, their *Regal Authority* to his *Rule and Empire*; as holding their *Dominion* from him, to whom all *power*, and *judgment is committed*, and can bear that stile only of being the *Catholick King*,
and

and *Lord of all*: for this is a truth that shines with so clear a light from the whole *Scripture*, as it may be strange how possibly it should be questioned, & nothing can be more comforting to *Christian Magistrates*, then to have so highly desirable a *bolding of their power*, as they may have the *Son of God*, thus interested in their *security*, and interest as a part of that *inheritance*, which belongs to his *Mediatory Kingdom*. Nor does it *evacuate the Magistracy of Heathens* for the interest of humane society, tho they have none in the *Church*; as it can never make void also his *Catholick Right*, and *Dominion* over them, by *whom Kings reign*; *Prov. 8: 15.* although it restrains the exercise thereof.

4. But there is yet a further, & growing light on this great subject which now meet us, & to be clearly seen, how the more eminent appearance of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, in the *Glory*, and *State of his Mediatory Kingdom* in the *Earth* was alone reserved to the *dayes of the seventh and last Trumpet*; for which as nothing can be more evident, then the *contemporating* of the same, with that *period of time*, in which was the *first rise*, and *restoring of the Church*, from *Antichristian darkness*, when the *Lord* did himself go forth in the *glory of his power*, to *plant and settle the Reformed Churches*; and thus to make way for his *Kingdom*, did with the *first blast of that Trumpet sound a retreat*, to his people out of *Babylon*: so I have here-

in, been made to admire with joy, the exactness of that correspondence betwixt the *events of this Trumpet*, that hath already taken place, with what is so punctually foretold hereof *Rev. 11: 15.* for as it is surely there promised, that then should be *an opening of the Temple of God in Heaven*, and *the Ark of his Testimony be seen there*, which had been formerly shut up; loe how expressly hath the *God of Truth made good his Word* herein, and kept the *time*, which he had set for the same; in the bright shining forth of his *truth*, and the *way of Salvation*, when for so many *ages* kept hid from the *World*; to which are the whole *Reformed Churches* this day a standing witness, yea have we not seen his appearance also in so unusual manner, in the *greatness of his power*, & with *garments dyed in blood*, to make way for the *visible Glory of his Reign*, as we can see it was there foretold, how the *Nations were angry*, and by their oppositions to him, made way for his wrath in such tremendous effects thereof, as it hath had these days past, to shew the *time was at last come*, to let the *World know*, that the *Lord Jesus Christ* is *not a titular King*, he to whom *all power is given in Heaven and Earth*, nor will bear that *Name and Stile in vain*, or admit a complemental Profession of the same; but that it is sure his *Dominion & Kingdom*, hath a settled *interest and revenue*, belonging thereto, which none may alienate from him, and the greatest of humane powers must be accountable for his claim thereto.

5. But now as our day, and lot, does thus meet in so extraordinary a period of time, which hath been so long expected and prayed for in ages past, it may be a time of great thoughts, and expectation of what is yet to come, as to the *visible Reign of the Lord Jesus*, our *blessed Head* in the *Glory and Majesty of his Kingdom*, without his *personal Reign or bodily appearance* unto men; which with full assurance of faith we should now wait for, when the *voice of this Trumpet* shall bring with it, such a *resurrection from the dead* of these *dry bones*, of the *Jewish Nation*, with so immediate an appearance of God alone herein, as shall dazzle with astonishment all the Nations about; yea when its sound and voice also shall call the whole Church that's on the earth, to that highest gratulatory song of *Moses*, and the *Lamb*, as once was at the *Red Sea*, for the final stroke & judgment on the Kingdom of *Antichrist*; wherein the *visible glory of his Reign* will then be seen with that evidence, and brightness, as if he were personally on the earth: and here is that true *Millennium* which is now in some measure begun, and we are surely called to expect, in a gradual increase to such a height, that in the *value*, and *splendor of this blessed Reign*, the *light of one day*, shall be as *seven days in one*, and the measure of one age then answer, yea exceed a *thousand Years* before, and is so before him, with whom *one day is as a thousand years*;

This seems to many in such a time, as a thing remote from their sense, whose thoughts are bound with present appearances, whilst our blessed *Head* is now gone unto a far Country, to receive a Kingdom for himself, and is invisible to men in these preparations, he is making for this higher glory of his *Reign upon the Earth*; so that he is no object of humane sight, nor can we come bodily to him, to receive his verbal commands from his mouth, as from an earthly *Monarch*, and from these inward, and great demonstrations of his *Reign*, they lie deep, and hid, betwixt him, and the souls of his People; but if our comfort, and hope stand by the *Christian Faith* this day, and on that assurance dare venture our soul upon an *Eternal State*; we should then with as full certainty of mind as of any visible things, give faith to this, that the *Son of God* will not lose the *Work* he hath begun, and so eminently appeared in; that the interest of his *Kingdom*, on the earth is the alone highest object of the divine care, and providence; and though his *Kingdom* is not of the *World*, but is purely *spiritual*, yet does the *World* stand thereby, so as it may be justly said, *sine precibus & pietate non flaret mundus*; nor is it questionable, but that his *Work* will be answerable this day, to his revealed will & intent, or can it be in the dark to us, what he is now doing in the *World*, when he hath made such publick intimation hereof by the voice of the last *Trumpet*, as should render

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this the most desirable part, that men can act, to
 fall in with this great, and rising interest of his
 Kingdom, in the season, and opportunity hercof; &
 it will surely be found in this time, that where the
 downfall of the Kingdom of Antichrist, is made re-
 markable in a Nation, where the terror of its rise,
 and growth, had so lately gone before; and the
 Kingdom of Christ, is not set up in its room, nor
 with a higher regard subjected to; that it must
 then quickly ripen, and make way, for some great
 outbreacking of wrath and judgment in such a place;
 for the time is come, that nations, which have imbra-
 ced the Profession of Christ, must stand, or fall,
 according to their concurrence with that interest
 on which the Lord is now gone forth, whose work
 carries not for men, nor is dependent on humane
 Counsels, yea it's sure these great Ministers of pro-
 vidence the Angels tho not seen to us are eminent-
 ly join'd in on this service, who are the stated Ser-
 vants of Christ as Mediator, & Head of the Church,
 and have accordingly their delegate charge, and
 commission to particular Churches, and Kingdoms,
 as that great design of Providence for the advance
 of his Kingdom in the World does require; and if
 the giving forth of the Law was so glorious upon
 that solemn entry, which the Churches Head then
 made on his Regal Office over Israel, by so extra-
 ordinar a ministrations of the Angels, what a hi-
 gher Glory must be on his entring on the greatest
 discovery and administration of his visible Reign

within time; blessed are they amongst men who may have an interest in this service, tho' with most it comes not under their thoughts, and apprehension, but as it was said of *Dux de Alva*, upon an *Eclipse of the Sun* which was then, when he was in a hot pursuit of the Wars, that he *had so much to do upon the earth, as gave him no leisure to look up to Heaven*; so is the great noise, and business of this day, how things may stand sure with us upon the earth. It is become the proverb of these times we are in, *that interest will not lye*, because according to this, men will always appear, and discover themselves; and when ever that word *interest* is made use of; it's judg'd to bear no other sense, then of some temporal concern only, because the *scent*, that most of this *Generation* seemes to be wholly on, is how *to seek their own things*, but *not the things of Jesus Christ*, which is truly the same, for men to reckon that their *soul*, is a *forreine* thing to themselves and that they have no real interest in the great things of Religion, or a hope beyond time: but it's well, that there is yet such a party this day on the earth, who's way can give that proverb the lie, and are of another spirit, so as to lay their greatest *temporal interest* down, that they may intently pursue the things of God, and the *interest of his truth*, and *Kingdome* amongst men, who with respect to this, would account it a small thing to be the greatest *favourits of Princes*, if these should once come in competition.

4. But I must now in the *last place*, add some-
 things further on this serious *Subject*; since if it be
 clear, and undeniable, so as to have our spirits
 once acquiescing herein, what hath been the
great design of Providence, with respect to Bri-
 tain, and Ireland in all these great, and astoni-
 shing changes, which have of late been there; it
 may be then fully understood, what the *present day*
 does most call for, and where the highest im-
 provment of such an extraordinary time does ly,
 which I hope will not be question'd, to have the
Kingdome of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his pree-
 minence herein, more entirely acknowledged, and
 settled in these Nations, when he is yet once again
 taking a new tryall of them for this end. We find
 under the *Law* such a thing, which was called
 the *Lords part*, and tribute payed unto him *Numb.*
31. as a memorial, and oblation, to witness
 their holding of him alone, all which they did
 enjoy; we see also a *national claim* layd to a pro-
 priety, and part in the *Lord*, as their alone grea-
 test interest in the earth, and that they might not
 be shut out herein *Josua 22: 25.* which would be
 a rare sight in this day, to see Nations contend-
 ing thus for a part in the *Lord*, and to have their
 joint right secured this way, as was then betwixt
 the two tribes, and the half beyond *Jordane*, and
 the residue of *Israel*; we have also things claim'd
 by the *Son of God*, as his alone propriety, which
 are called the things of *God Matt. 22: 1.* & are pu-
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rely *sacred* to him, which are not *mens*, and nor
 may alienate to any private interest, or *end*; yet
 there is a *bringing presents* to him, which is express
 foretold, and promised under this blessed Reign
Psalms 72: 10. when thus *Princes*, and *Kings*
 should serve, and do homage to the Lord Jesus
Christ, not as *men only*, but as *Kings*, in giving
 their Power to the furthest to uphold the authori-
 tity of his *Regal Power*, and *Dominion*; and here
 I must say what ever be threatning in ane unusu-
 al manner from the spirit, and temper of this Ge-
 neration; when nothing would seem more hope-
 less, then ane unite, and publick concurrence, to
 answer this great design of the Lord, and here
 to stand in the gape, before him, for turning away
 of his wrath; or to design a *National Reconci-
 liation*, as well as *Personal*; yet may there be no
 setting bounds to him therein, who is able to sub-
 due all thing to himself, and who in the way of
 his grace, does oft exceed, what could be possi-
 bly hoped for by men, in such a case: since now
 it after such signal indications of Providence, this
 should be the season and time design'd of the
 Lord, for a restoring work in these Nations, and
 in other of the *Reformed Churches*; and that he
 will yet spare a little as to the cutting down of the
 tree, even when the ax is laid to the root: it is there-
 fore, that this design shall make way for it's self,
 and go over such difficulties, as at other times
 would be insuperable, and make the greatest

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Mountains be as a plain; but if this *one tide*, and opportunity for such a service be now lost in joining in with so eminent a call of Providence for this end, it looks to be the *shutting of the door*, with such a judicial barr, as should never be again opened, and the *last woe* be more *fore*, and dreadful then all which hath gone before. But now I must speak a little more particularly, wherein it is these things doe most specially ly, which in that sense are the things of God, as purely sacred to him, since all things whatsoever are his, and belongs to him, yea wherein that which is the *Lords tribute*, and part is to be understood now in this day, that should be returned, with a resolute, and cheertul consent unto him.

1. It does in a peculiar respect ly here, to have the same publick, and national regard, to the authority of the *Laws*, and ordinances of his *Kingdome*, as a people who are stated in as near a relation to God, as once the *Kingdome of Israël*, and *Juda* was: this being a truth of the most undeniable evidence, thono in things ceremonial, or typical, or such *Laws* of Government, as had a temporary respect to that dispensation only, yet in a moral sense is it clear, as to what does most essentially relate to a *Nation*, or *Kingdomes* being the *Lords*. For it's sure these 3 *Nations* are this day, under a higher dispensation of grace, have a greater extent of their *Priviledges*, and stated under more singular engagements, now under the *Messia's*

Reign,

Reign; then ever *Israel* was: and it is in this sense, that the *Laws of the Kingdom of Christ* are *Royal Statutes*, and *Laws James 2: 8.* suitable to the state, and dignity of so great a *King*, and *Lawgiver*, whose authority will not be baffled, and hath a higher power, then that of *Angels*, or *Men*, to take account of their observance, where in is settled an *obligation* on the *souls*, and *conscience* of men, without exception of persons herein; in which our life as *Christians*, and the *standing*, and *safety* of *Nations* in a *publick state* does unavoidably ly; but these are *Laws*, & *Ordinances* of such a kind, as they can not possible be obler'd, and not loved, nor have any true regard amongst men, without *internal motives* make way thereto: and what a sad account may this be, that *these Kingdomes*, who were once so entirely subjected to *Antichrist* under the darkness of that dismal *Reign*, and did *give their power* to uphold that interest, with such an unite consent, yea did so resolutely give implicit obedience to his *Decrees*, and *Cannons*; now under the *brightness of the light of the Gospel*, comes not up to any such regard to the *Authority of the Lord Jesus*, and to these *Laws*, which he hath established, tho with the greatest endearments of *love* commended to his Church: there hath been great *stumbings* at the *Providences of the time past*, and what it should mean that this *last age* with such a differencing mark should be call'd the

Iron age; that thus the Holy God hath in so unusual a manner made use of a *rod of Iron*, in these *Western Parts*, where the *Reformed Religion* is most professed; but it should be no dark riddle, when the oppositions there, to the *Kingdom of his dear Son*, hath been at such a height, that if we could wisely discern the *Work of the Lord*, since the first rise of the *civil Wars of Britain*, we might clearly see how this was the *Signal given*, that he was then gone forth, and on the way, to take account of *Nations*, as well as *Persons*, that would oppose his interest.

2. It is sure this can not be questioned also, to be one of the great things of God, which is alone sacred to him, what concerns the publick rights, and freedom of the *spiritual Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as a visible politick body, with the highest respect to his *Royal Authority*, who is the alone Head, and Lawgiver thereto. It is known that he hath given an express *Charter* for the same to his *Church* under the *New Testament*, according to which the due limits, and bounds of that *spiritual Jurisdiction*, which he hath settled there, and the full extent hereof should be both keep'd clear, and closely adhered to, as an Interest of the *Lord Jesus*, which is as the apple of his eye, he hath join'd also these two great Interests of the *Civil*, and *Ecclesiastick Power*, in so entire a harmony, that tho they are to be ever keep'd distinct, yet are not to be divided from other, but

to move jointly in such a blessed, and desirable Union, as may most serve the great ends of the Kingdome of Christ, and the publick good of humane Society: and now when this great promise of *Christs* entring in a more conspicuous manner on the *Glory of his Reign*, is come to the *birth*, and begun to bring forth, which is that *period*, where to, it may be said, hath been reserved the *perfections of the Churches* visible state here on the earth, how highy desirable should it be to be found assistant thereto in such a day; but oh is it possible, that these who have such raised hopes of an *eternal Crown*, and *Kingdome in Heaven*, can have so low desires, or designs, how to be serviceable to the Kingdome of Christ here in the *earth*, yea when none can want an interest and room in this service, where it hath once a weight and value on their heart: but yet it may be a matter of hope this day, that these who by so singular an appearance of God, hath now the *Sovereign Power*, and *Authority in these Nations*, are no less eminently fitted to appear for him herein, then they are stated under the highest engagements for such an end.

3. It is surely one of the *things of God*, and an interest which is purely sacred to him, wherein the spreading of his *Kingdome in the World*, is most nearly concerned; which lyes in a *serious and faithful Ministry to the Church*, and is of that concern, as it may be justly called, *Indicium stantis*

stantis & cadentis Ecclesiae; for this is one of the highest *Ordinances of Christ* given to the Church, and that *way* which he hath himself consecrated for the inbringing and perfecting of the *Elect*; by which so great effects are wrought in the World, where ever there is a divine mission for the same to any part thereof, & the Church is in a building up there; an *Ordinance* by which most visible efficacy & supernatural influences are conveyed in a *moral way* under the blessing of that *institution*: but on the other hand nothing is more threatening to a *Nation*, as to the falling down of some dismal night of judgement, then the *corruption* and *debauching* of that which in it's own nature is so *excellent*, where things that are more extrinſick and of a humane concern, are so much looked after, but that which is Gods part in the great intent of this erection is of so low regard; that if an Inquiry were made through a *great part of Britain*, they should find the dark places of the earth there still amidst so bright a *day of the Gospel* as is now shining, & what a *multitude* is thus perishing thorow want of knowledge whilst it seems so little desired or designed, to have such a *Ministry*, whose highest study should be upon the great *Intent of Christianity*, to bring men to *Christ* not to *themselves*, and to allure and perswade their coming under his blest dominion and yoke; to press internal renovation of the heart and a necessity hereof, with that seriousness as might take

„ hold on their conscience, and let them see there
 „ can be nothing more highly irrational then to
 „ silt in ane exterior profession and form of Re-
 „ ligion, and not prove once upon their own
 „ tryall the truth hereof in its power and effica-
 „ cy, and whither it hath nor a vital part which
 „ lyes in ane inward life of Communion with
 „ God; for as this alone is such a *Ministry* that
 should be the blessing of a *Nation*, and *Kingdom*
 so in respect of this, to be of such a *distinguishing*
Profession tho in its self most agreeable to the
 truth, should be of no regard where this is want-
 ing, as a test for so *sacred ane Office*. It is,
 hope, unquestionable, that the *trust of the souls*
of men is greater, then any temporal concerns of
 a *Kingdom*, or *State*, and how this *Ordinance*
 that which hath the most peculiar influence to
prepare the way of the Lord, in this day for the
 blessed and near approaching time, of his most
conspicuous Reign on the earth in the *Glory thereof*
 I abstract here from any thing *controversial* and
 things are stated in the present day, only as to
 what I hope, there may be ane unite agree-
 ment in by all, who have a deep sence on the
 spirits, of the *blood and perishing of immortal*
souls this way, and a serious respect to that *Catholick*
Interest of the Kingdom of Christ amongst men. I know it was never a harder part
 then in this age to *stemm such a tide* as seems yet
 on the growing hand, of *prejudice against the way*

of truth, when so many are in the dark, tearing one another, and counting it desirable to have where at they may offend and stumble, whilst that study is not more followed to prevent, so far as is possible, mens taking of offence, even where it is not given, according that of the Apostle who is *offended and I burn not*: the *excess of disputing in this age* hath been a peece of our judgement, and the managing thereof so little to that end, of edification; but the *defect* may be no less evident on the other hand for the suitable improvements of *Christian prudence*, as a duty and service to God so absolutely necessar for the *regulating of duties*, according to the *circumstances of the Churches case*, and what the present day can bear without coolness or indifference in any concern of truth, which is that part of our *Religion*, that hath been too little improv'd.

We are indeed blessed with an *unchangeable rule of Sacred Truth*, which hath no dependence on humane Counsels or Power, to change or alter the same, or on the mutable revolutions of time, and can never vary from its self, yet is the tenderness and wisdom of divine Condescendence, in the *application thereof*, to be so far regarded, as on of the most weighty parts of *Religion*, lyes therein, how *present duties* may be with a *judicious discretion*, directed to that great end of *edification*, since that which may be necessary in one case, as it is cloathed, with other *circumstances*,

may be *hurtful*, and *destructive*. This is one of the most difficult *parts*, that such, hath allotted to them in the *times* we are *fall'n* in, who would stand in such a *gape*, & *breach*, where oppositions now thereto are so strong; and it may seem almost hopeless to crave justice in behalf of the *truth*, at the *bar* of *mens* *conscience*, when a *latitude* on *principles*, hath come to such a height, as the *authority* of *light*, is without fear controlled: yet on the other hand it may be feared, that the answering of that *Command* of the *Holy Ghost* is not suitably taken to heart, & the great consequence thereof, which is to *walk in wisdom*, towards these who are without, tho not being in that *Sence*, without the *Church*, yet as no less stated in a visible emptiness to the *truth*, which is according to *Godliness*, then such could be: there hath been much serious study, and designs by the *Servants* of *Christ* in this age to promote his *Kingdom* in *Britain* and *Ireland*, and there are yet there eminently fitted for so difficult a service, how to gain and prevail with the furthest measures of prudence and judgement, upon the most obstinately prejudged as any in this day, there hath been also lately a singular improvement made and blest, for a more unite contending for the *Faith* once delivered to the *Saints* in so hazardous a time: but it is sure there is yet some further length and essay called for, upon this great service, for the *Kingdom* of *Christ*, in taking off letts and stumbling
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bling bloks out of their way, who may be upon a sad *precipice* of breaking, and further alienation from the truth, and for some more full clearing of the same, from these designed *reflections* cast thereon, in such a way, as *convictions* might thus insensibly prevail, and gain ground with the greatest *Gainfayers*; whilst we know little what design grace may in this day have on such, and as the furthest regard should be kept to light, upon any *controverted truth*, without losing ground herein, yet should I judge it a door of hope to see these who are unite in the great concerns of *Truth and Godliness*, once meet in a more joint concurrence in behalf of these great things of God, which are not *controverted*, when the face of this *Generation*, is so threatening as to a further revolt from the *Christian Faith*, both in the *pureness*, and *power* thereof. This is to be a *work by itself*, which as it's of the highest *publick concern*, so does it require a more then ordinarie measure of *Judiciousnes* in following the same. My Unfitness to speak on such a *Subject*, should have restrained me herein, were it not to witness something of a *serious desire*, under which my soul is prest, for such an end, when the hazard of the perishing of so many who hath an *Eternal State* before them is so visible this day, and yet no further tryall made to gain and recover, according to that *rule, and practice of the Apostle I was all things to all, that I might gain some.*

some. Others can more fitly judge, as to the suitable managing of such a service, and how to fall in on the *right lib of duty* herein, only *some things*, I should wish were more designed, for taking off *prejudices*, and to breake thus one of the greatest *Engines of Satan* this day, against the interest of the *Ghospel*. 1. In coming a greater length by these who are of a serious spirit; to *Sacrifice private resentments*, to that *publick Interest of the Truth*, upon conceived *Injuries*, when its so evident what an influence *personal prejudice* this day hath to keep up distance, to highten differences, and caule further estrangement on such an account, from any fervent appearance for God; and this is surely one of the most honourable parts of a Christians work, how far he might overcome the distempers of others by humility, tenderness, and love, and walk in such a counter-motion to the spirit and temper of this day. 2. It is a service this day much calls for, to have *stumbleings* more prevented against these unquestionable settled administrations of the *Government of Christ in his Church*, so as the way and manner of his *Spiritual Kingdom* might be rightly understood; the proper *object* whereof is the *soul and inward man*, and it's great design to *restore & edify*; which is in such a way, that where it's truly answered, nothing can be more tender and healing and to attract any of a serious spirit to join in herewith; for it is a sad measure that the truth should

suffer,

suffer, from the *weaknes* or *exorbitancies* of any.
 It was suitable for the Christian Church in the
primitive times to plead that from *Heathens*, that
 the *offence*, and *practices* of none should be char-
 ged upon the *rule of their Profession*. 3. It were
 desirable also that further conviction might be
 served on these who are prone to stumble, how in
 the promoting of truth, and Godliness there is
 no pursuing any *divided interest* of a party, and
 that if such would once try and see, they can
 then judge, where the most *comprehensive in-*
terest within timelies, which all are jointly con-
 cern'd to promote, who hath any design on the
 Christian Profession for *eternal things*. 4. I shall
 but *add* this more, what an advantage should it
 be for the *truth*, and to conciliate a greater re-
 spect thereto, that all might see how sweet a
Contemperature and Harmony there is betwixt
pure zeal for God, which is according to *know-*
ledge, and the furthest *prudence* and *tenderneß*
towards men, and how the *rule and spirit* of the
Gospel can admit of no *bitterneß*, *wrath*, or *re-*
crimination, which are so abounding this day in
 the Church, in pursuing of *differences* upon any
 concern of the truth; for herein doth the *glory*,
 and *honor* of our *blessed Head* more eminently ap-
 pear in securing the *concord*, and *unity* of his
 Church, under a *diversity* of *light*, and *judge-*
ment, in some lesser differences about the truth
 by a *spirit of love*, and by its *power*, and *efficacy*

upon mens heart, in subduing the distempers of their *mind*, then by imposing the most *severe and absolute uniformity* in all things to be the measure of *Church Communion*; and it is ever found how this hath been, most easy, and practicable, among such who hath made the highest advance in the *life*, and *power of Christianity* then any else, since the nearer the *lines*, are to the *Center*, the *nearer* also, are they among *themselves*; and I must add herewith, that it may be little known what *convictive power*, might follow in a *time* of such high distempers as this, on a suitable application of that *wisdom*, which dwells with *prudence*, and comes from above, according to the *rule*, given for the same *James 3: 17.* to make a higher interest for the Kingdom of Christ, and to the saving of the souls of many, then now in an ordinarie way, would seeme possible.

4. As the furthest *tenderneß*, and *prudence*, is called for, to *prepare the way of the Lord*, for a further advance of his *Kingdom*, in taking out of the same so far as is possible these lets, and stumbling blocks, where the greatest hazard may be of offence; so should it be much preparatory also for a *higher service*, & a more unite appearing for God herein, and to stand in the most hazardous part of the *breach* of this day in behalf of that great interest of our Religion, which is upon the *Authority of God in his truth, and Testimony*, as the alone ground, on which the ultimate resolution of our Faith

Faith must found; since this is the very same inconvertible terms, to give to the Divine Majesty the Glory of his Godhead, and that tribute, which is most inviolably sacred, and essential to him, it would seem almost incredible, that such an hour of the power of darkness should fall in with the growing light of the Gospel, as the strange prevalence of a way, which is to commensurate the perfections of God, and the greatest mysteries of his truth, to our understanding, and to make humane reason, tho corrupt, finite, and limited, to be the alone Judge, and measure of our Faith of divine things, when the highest principle of reason, which is *prima veritas*, without which reason hath no principle to rest on, & no Standard else, is this, that where the God of Truth is the Revealer, and that it's sure it is his Testimony, it must then be as infallibly true, as it is sure he is God, since it is simply impossible, to find ever another foundation of truth, and certainty but this. We are fal'n in times of great expectation as to a near approach of the highest Glory of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom on the earth, and it would seem a strange prelude thereto, that so black a darkness should fall down, with so astonishing an encrease thereof, as tends not only to eclipse the same, but to deny him his essential Kingdom, who is the only begotten of the Father, and brightness of his Glory; yet I am sure it is a sign of that kind, as the morning darkness, which is

the darker the nearer it is to the day. It is indeed here, we may see an opposition to the Majesty of God, in such terms, that we might reckon humane nature could not be capable of, and be just matter of horror to a natural conscience, to see so numerous a party, who claims to be Adorers of *reason* turn'd so visibly madd on their *own destruction*. I know the furthest improvements this way; by *rational Inquiry* and *Tryal*, hath a greater Interest in Religion, and for strengthening of our Faith therein, then may be suitably apprehended; but it is sure the *ultimate Inquiry* herein can possibly go no further in the use of reason, but that what we beleeve is the undoubted *Revelation of God himself unto men*, & can we desire more when this is sure, for a full quiet, and acquiescence of the soul, tho it seem wonderful in it self, and exceed our dark, and limited thoughts, when it is impossible for him, who is *truth it self*, to lie, whose word is such, *cui non potest subesse falsum*; as it is no less sure that he who is infinitely good, can not deceive, or put an imposture instead of truth in their hand, who trust him; *divine truth* is the first groundstone of our happiness, but is not conceivable by the *light of nature*, to beleeve his being *truly God*, and not the truth also of his *promises*, which ever conform not only to the *things signified*, but to his *intent* therein, who can never *delude*, or *deceive*. But whilst I have been put to some thoughts with amaze-
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ment on ane appearance of such a kind against God this day amongst men, not only within *Christendom*, but by such as once layd claim, to the *Protestant Profession*; some *Reflections* tended to give more clearness, and settlement, to my own spirit herein, which I shall but in a few words mention, 1. that when the darkness of ane *implicite Faith*, and relyance on men under *Popery* hath been so sore baffled, & turn'd out of credit in such an inquisitive World as this, loe *Satan* hath taken himself to the *very contrare air: h*, and knew how to fall in with the temper of a *brisk, bold, and daring age*, that he might settle a *new* opposition against God, and the interest of his *Kingdom*, wherein he hath unite, and fixed his greatest strength, so that since he was cast down from his *Throne* by the Power of the *Gospel*, he hath not had a greater *Triumph*, then in this attempt, how to bring man upon it, and sett humane reason at once both against *God*, and *it self*, in such a manner, as to be it's own *Executioner*, and in subjecting the highest mysteries of truth to it's comprehension to make it not only equal to God, but give it a preference to him, who is the alone former thereof, which I must reckon to be the nearest approach that *humane nature* yet ever made to that *sin*, by which the *Angels* did first fall, and that it is the *master peece* of that *Prince of darkness*, and his *ultimus conatus* against the truth, who knows his *time is short*: 2. It may be with
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astonishment, discernable under what a stroak such are as not to see, whither this way hath led them, and how far the Holy God, hath thus confounded their *reason*, as visibly, as once these were in their *Language*, who would attempt to *build a tower up unto Heaven*, when this way, left to ane absolute uncertainty, ever to fix their *Faith*, the *Standard*, and measure whereof, must be the *comprehension of reason*, which hath no firm or intallible ground to settle on besides it self, and whilst they cannot make the *reason*, and judgement of others, as considerate, and knowing as themself, meet with theirs, the result thereof is to put a judicial madnels in the room of *reason*, so as to conceive a *created, & dependent God* to give divin homage to, and that at once he should be both a *God*, and a *Creature*; and adore a *comprehensible Object* with *divine Worship*, yea this way without a contradiction to themself they can give no faith to the *Creation* as being brought purely out of nothing, or to the *Resurrection* of the dead, as wholly *incomprehensible to reason*, they must deride *Israëls Passage* thorow the *Red Sea*, or the *Suns standing still* on *Josua's* call to verifie „ that *Rom. 1: 21*, because that when they knew „ God, they glorified him not as God, but profes. „ sing themselves to be wise, they became fools, „ thence is such ane amasing stroke thus inflicted on their reason, for it may be said as in the Poëtick Fiction of *Phaëton*, that when he sought to
guide

guide the *Chariot of the Sun*, for a time, he was like to burn the earth, until he was struck with a *thunderbolt* from Heaven; so hath this party tried how to manadge *reason*, as the supream Director, and Judge upon all that is sacred, as they have gone near to destroy both *Reason*, and *Religion* at once, but tho the strongest rational Arguments, with such seem to bear no weight, I doubt not ere long of such a visible demonstration of the Divinity of our ever *Blessed Redeemer*, which he shall give before the World, that he may be known to be *God*, as will for ever end this *Controversy*. There is a constraint on the *Elect Angels*, to admire what they cannot comprehend of the *Mystery* of the Gospel, and that incomprehensible love of God to fallen man, but oh what a return, and recompence does *engaged mankind*, give to him who counted it no robbery to be equal to God, yet to become man for our sake, that in the face of the greatest brightness of light, does bear such enmity to his *Godhead*, as the eye of *reason* must be put out to serve this end, and when such a *light* is turned into *darkness*, how great is that *darkness*! I have thought to the furthest to know, where the strength of such a *Profession* could possibly ly, this being so great a *Head*, whereon the *truth*, or *nullity* of the *Christian Faith* is so visibly stated; and I durst appeal their *reason* and *conscience* if a resolute aversion, to the *Person* of our *Redeemer*, in the union of
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the divine, and humane nature, and to the *pu-
renes*, and *sanctifying* *verue* of the *Ghoſpel*, ly
not more in the *will*, then their *judgment*, and
be not the leading principle of this ſtrange Con-
troverſy. For the true *Interest of reaſon*, in *Re-
ligion*, I may ſay, it hath been one of the *great
ſtudies of my life*, to improve the ſame, for a
ſolid, and judicious eſtabliſhment in; the Faith
of the *Ghoſpel* (which I ſhould ſtill commend
with the greateſt reſpect to any of a ſerious ſpirit)
but herewith I could poſſibly go no further with-
out giving up with all uſe of *reaſon*, or give a
higher preheminance thereto, then in a full *evi-
dence*, that what we are called to believe is of *di-
vine Revelation*; nor can deſire more to warrant
a *hope and confidence*, tho' *againſt hope*, as to all
rational grounds, but that it ſurely hath a *divine
promise* to lean on. It might be judged, *Sathan*
needed no humane aſſiſtance to theſe *fiery darts*,
which are ſo uſually thrown at the choiceſt *Chri-
ſtians*, to ſhake their *faith* on this head, but it is
not at an ordinarie rate, that its great *Author* hath
deſigned the *tryall* thereof. 3. There is one
Reflection further hath affected my ſpirit upon this
Controverſy, as to the *juncture of time*, when it
is become now ſo contagious and prevalent, whilt
we are to *pray*, *wait*, and *hope* with aſſurance
for the renting of the *vail* yet off many dark pla-
ces in the earth, to make way for that *higher Glo-
ry of Chriſts Reign* thereon, which ſhall be to the
gentil

gentile Church as life from the dead; yea when it is drawing so near to that great Revolution of Providence, when *Shem*, and *Japhet* shall yet again meet in the same *Tents*; how so strong a conspiracy is on foot to oppose the same, and to shut any door whither for *Jews* or *Pagans*, to enter at upon the Christian Faith, but where they find so venerable a thing, as *reason*, standing in their way to tell them, that the most essential part of *Christianity* is incompatible therewith, & that they must subject themselves to the authority of *humane Judgment*, and not to *God*, if they design to be *Christians*. It is a famous passage, I must relate here of that great *Jewish Council*, held in *October*, 1650. in the plain of *Ageda*, 30 leagues from *Buda* in *Hungary*, to search the Scripture concerning the *Messias*, and the truth of the *New Testament*, where after seven dayes debate about the same, and not a few Arguments offered from their continued desolation and captivity since the time of *Christ*; some *Popish* Deputies at last were admit, who in stead of promoting the *Christian Faith*, pressed them to believe the *Worship* of the *Saints* departed, and of the *Virgin Mary*, upon which that great Assembly broke up in a tumult, crying no *Christ*, no *Images*, no *Woman God*, and cast dust on their heads, upon so irrational a *Blasphemy*: It is true, some of the *Rabbies* then, did much desire *Protestant Divines* to
 „ have

„ have met with them, but that the Pope and
 „ Emperor had joined to shut them wholly out,
 „ tho thousands of Strangers were then present
 „ at a meeting of so great expectation, of the
 „ Jews coming in to the Christian Faith; but
 I mention it for this end, what a cry would
 that have made, if they had been told of a crea-
 ted and dependent God, & to subject themsel-
 ves here to the greatest contradictions to Reason.

5. I shall now in the close but *add* this further,
 what should be specially expected upon the grow-
 ing state of *Christs visible Kingdom in the World*,
 that as these Fogs & Mists which have been raised
 upon the *authority of his truth*, will be then quickly
 dispelled, so is there a *higher Tribute* to be given
 into him of the *Glory of his Works*, and the *Out-*
goings of his Providence about the Church in
 these *last times*. I know, the work and business
 of this day lyes not here, or in designs of that
 nature, but it were well if much of that which
 makes the greatest noise this day in the way of *Re-*
ligion, had its room filled with so choise a *study* as
 this is, tho it is indeed one of the peculiar en-
 dowments of the Spirit of God, given to some
 more eminently then others, to be *skilled* in the
Methods and Deeps of Providence, and to under-
 stand aright how the *Work of God* lyes towards
 the *Church*, and his designs therein, according
 to these discoveries given of the same in his
 Word, and what *watch of the night* we are now
 under;

under; but on this *Head*, I shall speak to a few *grounds*, whereon this *Tribute to the declarative Glory of God*, from his great Works of Providence about his Church, will in another manner be rendred to him then heretofore.

I. Because it is surely in this way of his great and extraordinary Works, that the Lord does design a more eminent discovery of himself, then in all these times that are hitherto past, and will thus enter his Church on that *brightness and splendor of his second coming*, which belongs to the *last ages*; when his going forth in the greatness of his strength will be with that evidence, as shall sease the World with fear and astonishment; and when he is in another manner to glorify himself in his People, then was formerly in these *suffering times*, which are now *past*, wherein his Glory was to shine forth in the eminency of the *passive graces of his spirit*; for now is the *Mystery of God*, in what yet remains thereof to be finished, in another way to take place, as shall call the Generation that's coming up to such an *observing and admiring Work* of the great Acts of God, that may need a more then ordinate measure of grace to answer the same: but we must look for *great things of Judgment*, coming on, to be accomplished, as well as of *mercy*, the *Vyalls of divine Wrath*, and *last Plagues*, are but in part poured out, wherein the appearance of God will be with much terror to the World, and that last

N Triumph

Triumph of his Justice within time, will not be of ane ordinaire kind; we are to expect great *shakings of the Nations*, and times of *breaking down*, as well as of *building up*, which are yet to come, and drawing near.

II. Because we are entred on these *times*, when the Lord is in a more singular way then heretofore, to put the whole Generation of his People, on that *part of Divinity*, and the study thereof, which relates to his *Works*, and that great Mystery of *Providence* about his Church; when the *Key* shall then be put in their hand for opening up, and a more full understanding the way of the Lord in these *times past* under the New Testament. This is indeed a weighty part of *Divinity*, which is reserved to the *latter times* in the perfections thereof, and these higher improvements, to be made on that blessed *study*, then was attainable in former ages, when his work now is coming to a more *full point*. It hath been remarkably the business of this age, to make a more accurate search, and some greater discovery upon *natural causes*, and the workings thereof, but I doubt not, that ere long the inquisitive World, shall be in another manner awaked, and their *Inquiries* run in a higher channel above all *second causes*, to see and admire the *great Acts of Providence*, in the *Divinity* thereof, and not what is *humane* therein, but as they are by way of Eminency the *Works of God*, in the brightness of his immediate
appea-

appearance in the same. It is one of the dismal signs of the present time, how much the spirits of men are at work to darken so far, as possible the most eminent *Discoveries of God in his Works*, and in the most extraordinary revolutions of humane affairs, as if they would set bounds and limits to him, according to the course and order of second causes, and subject, both the truth of his *Word* and his *Works* to the comprehension of their *reason*, tho some civil respect, they will give, and the name of his being the *prime cause*, but shut their eyes on what is more extraordinary and solemn in any piece of his work. I would yet point at some *special Heads*, that belong to this choise part of *Divinity*, which we are to expect, will in another manner be opened up, and I desire to rejoice in the hope hereof. 1. As to these more *singular cases of Providence*, which hath been in the Churches course, since her *first translation* from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*, with the issue and consequences thereof, contrare to the rules or principles of natural reason, which is an Inquiry to be more fully improven, then whatever hath been attained this way; when men shall see the *end of the Lord* herein, with such evidence as shall tend to *clear all bygones* in his work. 2. These remarkable *Periods of time*, wherein the *Prophetical Part of the New Testament*, hath been successively brought forth in their proper *Season*, as was foretold, is yet to

have the *scall* more fully taken off, and that *vail*, which was over them; so as it shall be clear and easy to see how the Lord hath not only kept his Word and Truth to his Church, but hath kept these times also exactly, to which such great *events of Providence* did relate. 3. There is a greater discovery yet to be made, then hath been hitherto, how the Church hath been led in a right way, and by a straight line in her whole course, through that long, and terrible *Wilderness*, which she was to pass, under the dispensation of the *Gospel*; and what eminent *services* the Saints have been put on in these strange measures of their *warefare*, which was then allotted to them, and in their *overcoming work* thereby; yea what a higher Triumph our *blessed Redeemer* hath had in the *Faith*, and *patience* of his People in so dismal a time, then in any external flourishing state of his Church, so as it might be said it was then day, as to the *presence of his spirit*, and *irresistible efficacy of his truth* on his followers, when it seemed otherwise as the darkness of *midnight*. 4. There belongs to this part of *Divinity*, some higher breaking up of light, yet to be made on that *Mystery of the Communion of the Saints* here with other, in the way of *providence*, and what a joint interest they have herein, as to what hath been more singular in the Lords way, and disposal about others of his People: we have little understood what an *enriching trade*, we might drive upon

upon that *stock* of these *ancient experiments* of Christians in following the Lord; and these eminent tryalls they have made of the truth, who hath in ages past gone before, and what a *Pawn* is thus put in our hand, for a further strengthening in the Faith; yea what publick interest thus the whole *Church of Christ* hath, in some eminent acts of Providence about particular Christians, which in the import and greatness thereof was not given for themselves only, but as a publick concern to the whole *Generation*, that seek after God in their day, and for the times to come, according to that *Psal. 10: 3. Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. 5.* I must add, one great improvement of this *special Head of Divinity*, which will yet be above the measures of times past, in the extent of that *Reference*, and *Appeal*, before *Angels and Men*, in behalf of the *Truth*, and *Faithfulness of God*, for what he hath spoken and promised to his Church; and is that *Tribute of praise*, which in a higher degree is to be payed in to him, now when it's so near to the close of time, then by that great testimony of *Joshua 25: 14.* how *not one thing had fail'd of all the good things the Lord had then spoken in behalf of his Church, but had fully taken place*, and was the same *Appeal*, which *Solomon* made *I. Kings 8: 56.* for this with a higher glory and evidence is to be the *Testimony* of the latter days, when it's drawing near to that magnificent close and period of *Prophetick*

Chronology, and finishing of the *Mystery of God* therein; how his *spotlesstruth* hath as the *Sun in his strength* kept it's way and course amidst all these dark clouds, which hath spread to darken the same; and no *promise* or *prediction* of that sacred record of the *Scripture*, hath ever fail'd or fallen to the ground, now when it's drawing so near to the *perfect Day*. It is true each *age*, hath had their proper *measures of light*, in order to the service of that time, and something peculiar allotted in the dispensations of *Providence*, yea some greater eminency did belong to these *times past*, when the sufferings of Christians did most abound, in the *adventures of Faith*, and in the *tryal of love*, then in after times, but as to higher discoveries of the *works of God* & the *depths of providence* about his Church, these was reserved to that *period*, when the *Mystery of God* hereon should be more fully persfited, and in this respect it's to be said, *blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh*, to such a solemn time, and to have his lot fall therein, as is spoken *Dan: 12: 12.*

III. But for a further clearing of this *Subject*, since the *Glory of the Kingdom of Christ* is so nearly concern'd in the discovery and entertainment of his *Works*, in the day thereof, and now when a more eminent appearance thereof is near, that *Kingdoms and Nations* in their *Complex Body*, shall in a more solemn way be the *Lords*; It should be expected that the *return* and *oblation of praise* upon

upon the great *Acts of his Providence* shall be more remarkable, as a *publick deed of Nations, and Churches* then hath yet hitherto been; yea that when the Lord does in any singular way appear, for their security, and standing, by Providences of a *publick and national extent*, that a *gratulatory retribution*, on their part must be of the same extent, under a *publick care and regard*. It is true, there is a settled *frame of subordinat means*, by which the Providence of God does work in the great designs thereof, that we are called to regard, wherein I doubt not, but the *Ministry of the Angels* hath the greatest interest, as one of the great *Ordinances* he hath settled in behalf of his *Church*, tho as to their *special offices, and a legate service to particular Churches and Christians*, is something that's more dark; but it may be hoped will ere long be with a clearer evidence known in these great transactions of Providence, which are yet to take place, when a *nearer Communion* may be then attained betwixt these *blessed Spirits*, and the *Saints* here on the earth, then is yet known, but tho there is no time wherein the Lord will not put honor on *instituted means*, and on that established order of his working, yet whilst most have such ordinar thoughts of *God* herein, and are so ready to fix their eyes wholly on *men*, his honor is concern'd to let the *World* know he is *God* by more extraordinary demonstrations, yea such are most of the *great events of his Word*,

which are yet to be brought forth as cannot possibly in an other way be expected. But on this *Subject* I would humbly offer some few reflections, which should be matter of a serious regard.

1. That as its highly becoming, on some *eminent piece of the Work of God*, or publick deliverances, for a Nation or State to have *solemn and publick returns of thankfulnes* to him thereon; yet is it strange how so little regard should thus be to have the greatnes of any such mercy *sought out*, and the same *publick care extended*, for keeping up a *venerable remembrance* thereof, so that such a service of *Gratitude* be not bounded with the transient work of a day, since otherways it is a most *essential want*, and with holding a proper and important part of that *Tribute*, which is due into God herein, for there can be no suitable regard to serve the end of such *Providences*, and what was so straitly enjoined of the Lord under the *Old Testament*, which was the *Churches* continued practice there; yea of the same *moral and perpetual use* in all after times, if it should not be still a *publick trust* under the furthest *humane care* to promote the same, tho *divine Record and History* for this intent does now cease.

2. But as this hath an unquestionable *tye on Churches*, and a *Christian State* to design the most honourable respect, and entertainment of the *great Acts of God* in their day, and is made their *proper talent* to answer to; so does a just exoneration

tion herein, call for the most *exact scrutiny* and *search* on the *truth* and *evidence* thereof, on which the weight, and credit of this *service* does so far depend, to cause a more *full assent*, by these who come after to such a testimony, that these rare Providences, wherein the Lord did thus make himself known, were not only in the present time *sought out*, and enquired unto, under their *proper circumstances*, but by such of greatest weight, and advantage, for a work of this nature; whose sincerity and judiciousness might be convincing, and the integrity of such an *Intent*, cleared from any partial respect or end, but altogetherly for *exalting the Majesty of God*, and strengthening men in the *Faith*, by so great a *seal to his Truth*, and for the interest of the *Posterity*; yea wherein these who in some lesser differences did not fully meet in the same *Judgment*, yet might intirely unite, in such a *service* and *testimony* as this.

3. Where the Lord makes himself known in more *illustrious acts of his power*, as may be called *Magnalia Dei*, to some particular *Nation*, and *Church* beside others, who herein are in a more then ordinaire way interested; it might seem equal, and answer to the highest reason, they should be of that value, as to be entred on a *National Record*, and have that concurrence of *humane authority*, to make the evidence hereof as *authentick*, as the *publick deeds*, or *rights*, which

belong to such a state. It is true, there is no want of *Histories*, and the Church hath been blessed with that singular mercy of *Martyrologies* by faithful and impartial hands, to attest the power of divine grace, and supports of the spirit given to sufferers for the truth, and of late it was of great use the concurrence of *Civil Authority* to that *Work of the History of the Church of England*, that's now extant, by an excellent *Writer*; but for this intent, it is something distinct by its self, with respect only to these *Monuments of Providence*, relating to a particular Church, that are of publique, clear, and uncontrolled evidence, to have the remembrance thereof with the highest honor, kept up, and secured from the prejudices and cavills of men thereat; yea to such *Pas-sages* in that day, whereon the *Signature*, and *Impress* of the more immediate appearance of *God* hath had most full and bright evidence; these great changes of a publique interest, which hath then occurred, wherein some extraordinary *Conjunction* in the course of Providence, might be seen, above *natural causes*, and the ordinarie way of *Gods Working*, such interpositions of his wonderful power, by which he hath designed to put some eminent honor, on *acts of trust*, and relyances on his truth, as might be *exemplary to after times*, and serve for that end, that they who come after, might sett their hope on *God*, and not forget his *Works* *Psal.* 78: 7. yea extraordinary *Acts* also of

divine

divine Judgment, whereby he hath appeared in some unusual manner, to vindicate the honor of his *Laws*, against publick and notorious violations of the same, which may be clearly seen were not designed for *that age only*, but as a *publick concern* for after times.

4. Can it be questioned, that since that *Sacred Canon of the Scripture is sealed*, and *consigned to the Church*, to have no more addition thereto, but that it's now a part of the highest *trust* upon the *Gentile Churches*, to have a most venerable respect for conveyance of the *great Works of God*, from *one Generation to another*, & to bear such *evidence* thereof, as the nature of these things is capable of, for a *moral certainty*; yea that this might be on such *tryall*, as should silence and convince the most inquisitive, and suspicious spirits of men herein; this is of a serious and weighty import, if it were considered: 1. How so high a *concern of the Glory of God* is thus intrusted to *tradition by humane testimony and record*, and to the credit thereof, as that way only which the Lord hath now fix'd for the conveyance of his marvelous works to after times, on which he once put that value as to give them a special room in *Sacred Writ*, and tho there is no such way now to attest the same, yet is not the weight of that service taken off the Church, which is mentioned *Isay 62: 6.* to be the *Lords Remembrancers and Recorders of his great Acts*, as the *Original* there bears. 2. It is un-

is unquestionable that he hath reserved the greatest of his Works, wherein he will most eminently appear, to the *last times*, and what a loss hath it been to the Christian World unto this day, that unfaithful part which we must charge upon *former ages*, in no suitable regard to have such an interest and treasure, with a *publick care*, secured for the posterity, through which the credit and honor of *tradition* hath been so much broke as hath rendred the use thereof of small effect.

3. And it's known how difficult a part it is to gain credit in this day, to the truth of what's more extraordinary in *passages of providence*, even where the relaters thereof hath as to their own conscience and conviction the most full assurance, and hath designed what Inquiry was suitable in such a case; whilst the want of a more unite and publique concurrence takes off so much of that weight, which it might have in after times; but I have confidence, that a higher service of this kind in the improvement of so great a *Talent* for the honor of God, does yet wait on the *Church*, & succeeding race, as shall tend to bring up what hath been detain'd of such a rent and tribute of praise, yea that these whole *Lot* shall be in the dayes that are now coming, and fall in with the growing state and glory of the Kingdom of Christ to see these things, which will exceed the thoughts and faith of this day herein, shall see and enjoy such *Records* of these times, where the
 great

great intent shall be of that kind *Revel. 15: 3*
Great and Marvelous are thy Works, Lord God
Almighty, Just and True are thy Ways thou King
of Saints, and where the credit of such a testi-
 mony shall not be *personal* only, but *national* in
 a more solemn, unite concurrence herewith then
 hath been hitherto known.

4. It is on this *Subject*, I must *add* further,
 that a *traditional conveyance* of more special and
 momentous things of Providence, might be of
 much use, were it suitably improv'd, to have a
 remembrance thereof continued in a *Family Line*
 and *Relation*, which is one peculiar way, where-
 by the *present Generation* might declare the truth
 and faithfulness of God to the *next*. It is true,
 there is no serious Christian, but is thus sisted,
 and accountable on such a service to put to his
seall, by some explicit personal testimony,
 that God is true, upon his tryall hereof, and most
 specially to improve that season, when it is near
 to the *close and shutting up of time*, that with his
 last and dying breath he might bear the same wit-
 nesses to the truth of Christ, and to the advantage
 and excellency of his way and service, which he
 did in the whole course of his life past, and of
 that joy, complacence & assurance of mind, which
 these have found, and now hath in the way of
 truth; but there is something more peculiar in
 this *Testimony*, to be understood, with respect to
 these to whom things in a more singular manner
 hath

hath been allotted then to other Christians, in the way of Providence, and hath in the *Record* and *Journal* of their life had more extraordinary *Remarks* and *Confirmations* from the Lord, as gives higher accels to this service, and adds to the value of such a *Testimony*. I would offer but a few thoughts on such a *Head*, which may possibly seem a strange and dark thing to some:

1. It was once for a long time that the *Series of the Church* was kept up in a *Family Line* from *Abraham* to the 12 *Patriarchs*, and what a rare course and conduct of Providence was thus transmit to after times, which is so great an interest, and treasure to this day, and tho that *convoiance* was by an infallible spirit, yet is this so far *exemplary* thereby, for such a confirmatory witness, by observing Christians, to the truth, when it comes to their *last improvement of time*, and of what hath been more signal and eminent in the Lords dealing with them, that it should be one of the choicest *Legacies* they could bequeath to their *Relations*, yea a singular mean to have Religion thus kept alive in a more venerable respect thereto in a *Family State*, and to fix stronger engagements to the way of God, on their *surviving Friends*.
2. I hope there be no serious discerning Christian, but hath some more *select Observations of their life*, and what hath been most remarkable in the course of Providence towards them, layd up, something of which might be of *singular use*, besides their

their own personal interest therein, to a further establishment of others in the way of truth; tho any improvement of that kind needs much *Christian prudence and sobriety* to qualify the same; yea, were this suitably designed in such dismal times, we are now fall'n in, what access might private Christians have, these specially who have gone through more extraordinary tryalls then others, to be thus a *publique blessing* to their Generation; and how honourable a service were it for God, to advance the credit of Religion, and fix deeper impressions of the same on mens spirits, that these who have been admit to more *special adventures of Faith*, amidst the various conflicts of their day, should in the *close* thereof have this as their proper work to *deliver the truth* off their hand, which they had received, with their *seal and testimony* to the same, as that which they had proven and tryed in a more then ordinarie way, and which had brought them safe and honourably through, as was the last Words and *Witness of David* 1 Kings 14. *Who hath delivered my soul out of all distress*: this I humbly judge falleth in as the last and peculiar service of a Christian, when it hath the advantage to be more valuable and convincing to others, then in any other time of their life, & were a thing highly desirable, that a *work of this kind* should be suitably prepared, to prevent a surprisal of death, & going silent off the *stage*, which hath been the lott of these who have shin'd most brightly

brighly thereon; and as it surely hath the most opportune season in the *last Scene of a Christians Work*, so may it be yet more designed and regarded in the *last ages of time*, when there is to be expected such *Testimonies for God*, and to the *Glory of his Truth*, as will much exceed the *ordinar Standard* of these times past, and we are now in. The full sence of that *Scripture John 3: 33.* should have a great weight herein, *he that hath received his Testimony, hath sett to his seall that God is true*, where there is a peculiar debt, and trust on the one hand that is put on such, who hath the truth and testimony of God consign'd for tryall of the same; and a discharge thereof, which on the other hand they stand accountable for putting to their seall that *God is true*, which is the most solemn way of a *Testimony* before men; tho some may be thus in a special manner stated by higher engagements to sanctify God before others, and when some more singular passages of Providence comes under such a witness and seall as a *distinct part of a Christians Testament* in his parting with time, it brings the strongest evidence that humane testimony can possibly have for conveyance of the same.

F I N I S.

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